The University of Texas
Institute of Latin-American Studies

Latin-American Studies, VII

The Military and Political Career of José Joaquín De Herrera, 1792-1854

BY

THOMAS EWING COTNER

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS
AUSTIN

1949

The Woman's College of
The University of North Carolina
LIBRARY

NIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBOR

BOOK CARD

Please keep this card in
book pocket

LATIN-AMERICAN-ST

University of North Carolina at
Greensboro, North Carolina 27412

Walter Clinton Jackson Library

The University of Texas
Institute of Latin-American Studies

Latin-American Studies, VII

The Military and Political Career of José Joaquín De Herrera, 1792-1854

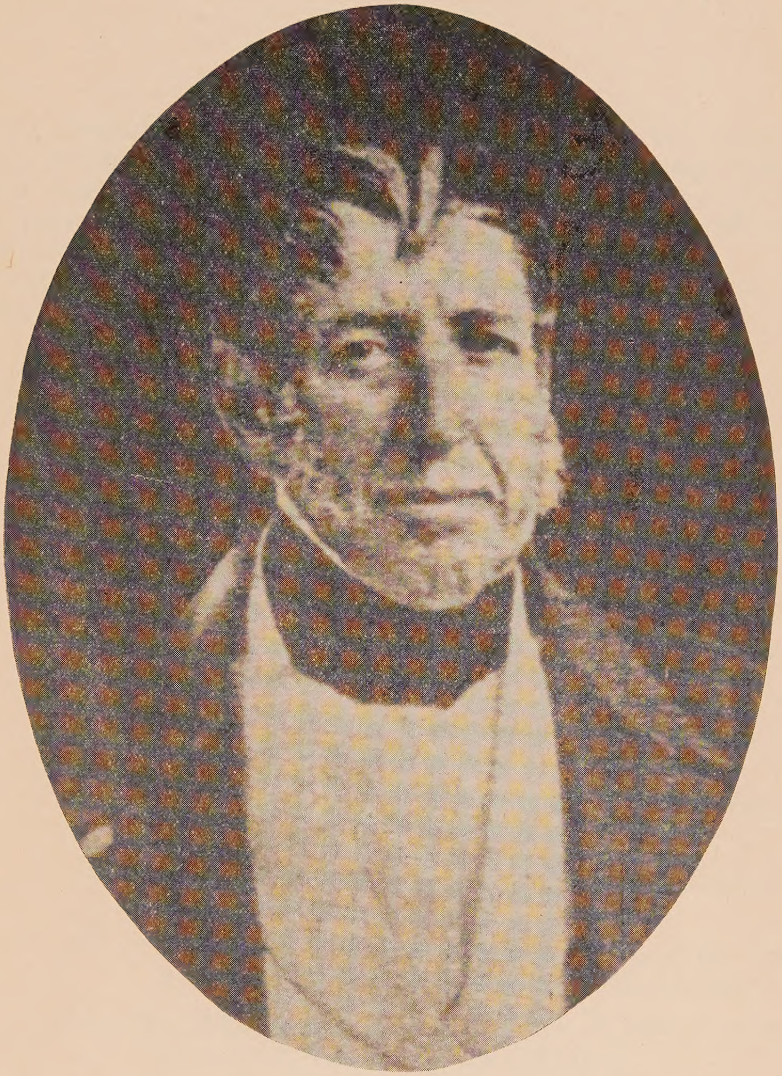
BY

THOMAS EWING COTNER

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS
AUSTIN

1949

F
1401
T45
v.7



José Joaquín de Herrera

Foreword

The Institute of Latin-American Studies of The University of Texas continues with this publication, under the general title of *Latin-American Studies*, a series of monographs and volumes in the Latin-American field, including proceedings of conferences sponsored by the Institute of Latin-American Studies.

Publications of the Institute of Latin-American Studies of The University of Texas appear in the following series:

Occasional Series

I—*Some Educational Problems in Peru* by Max. H. Miñano-García

II—*Address* by Charles H. Stevens

Latin-American Studies

I—*Intellectual Trends in Latin America*

II—*Some Economic Aspects of Postwar Inter-American Relations*

III—*Pedro de Valdivia, Conquistador of Chile* by Ida Stevenson Weldon Vernon

IV—*The Inca Concept of Sovereignty and the Spanish Administration in Peru* by Charles Gibson

V—*Some Educational and Anthropological Aspects of Latin America*

VI—*Political, Economic, and Social Problems of the Latin-American Nations of Southern South America*

VII—*The Military and Political Career of José Joaquín de Herrera* by Thomas Ewing Cotner

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/latin-america-studies_1949_7

Preface

The military and political career of José Joaquín de Herrera covers an interesting and important period in the history of the Mexican republic. He was born in Jalapa in 1792, and like many other creoles, he began his military career in the service of the Spanish king. In 1820, he withdrew from the royalist army; the following year, he joined with the forces of Agustín de Iturbide in the final phase of the war for independence from Spain. For the next thirty years Herrera worked quietly but diligently for the establishment of a federalist republic and a program of moderate liberalism. He opposed the emperorship of Iturbide and aided in bringing about his downfall in 1823. Herrera also opposed the tyrannical despotism set up by Santa Anna in the early 1840's and played a conspicuous part in the peaceful overthrow of the dictator in December, 1844. During this period, Herrera held such important posts as member of the Chamber of Deputies, Minister of War on three occasions, the highest military rank of general of division, head of the preliminary peace commission in 1847, director of the Monte de Piedad, and President of the Republic for two administrations. In each of these positions, he displayed ability, honesty, and good judgment.

My interest in President Herrera was first aroused in Dr. Charles W. Hackett's course in Mexican history at The University of Texas, in which he pointed out Herrera's reasonable and statesmanlike attitude concerning the recognition of Texas' independence. Herrera hoped to recognize the independence of Texas on the basis that she remain an independent republic. However, when Texas voted for annexation to the United States, Herrera was willing to negotiate with the United States concerning the southern boundary of Texas in an effort to prevent possible hostilities. Unfortunately, the war party in Mexico, led by Paredes, forced Herrera from the presidency because of his conciliatory attitude. Had Herrera's proposals been carried out to a successful conclusion, the war between the United States and Mexico would not have occurred, and Mexico would have been spared invasion and the loss of additional territory.

In the light of present-day interest in inter-American coöperation and cultural development, it is particularly timely to study the life of a man who worked for international peace and friendship and for the constitutional development of democratic processes in his own country. His long career of public service was

152248

marked by moderation, a fundamental respect for law and order, and a sincere interest in the people and the nation which he served. His private life was also above reproach. He occupies a unique place in Mexican history in that he was the first constitutionally-elected president to complete his term of office and to turn over that office to his constitutionally-elected successor. Herrera deserves the highest praise for his efforts as president, following the war with the United States, to promote the reconstruction and regeneration of the nation. He gave to Mexico an era of comparative internal stability and a period of economic and constitutional progress unparalleled during the period from 1821 to 1848. In view of the position of prominence held by Herrera and the importance of the era in which he lived and which he helped to shape, it seems unusual that no Mexican or American author has written an extensive account of his life in Spanish or English. For these reasons and with these thoughts in mind, I have endeavored to trace the military and political career of one of Mexico's truly outstanding presidents and statesmen, José Joaquín de Herrera.

This opportunity is taken to express my appreciation to Dr. Charles W. Hackett, Professor of Latin-American History and Director of the Institute of Latin-American Studies at The University of Texas, who has been an inspiration in his courses and has supervised the writing of this dissertation. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance rendered by Dr. Carlos E. Castañeda and Miss Nettie Lee Benson of the Latin-American Collection, The University of Texas Library, Miss Winnie Allen, archivist, and Mrs. Marcelle L. Hamer of the Texas Collection.

During my research in Mexico, I found government officials and individuals most helpful and coöperative. I particularly wish to thank for their coöperation Román Beltrán, Jefe de la Sección de Bibliotecas de Hacienda; Edmundo O'Gorman, Subdirector del Archivo General de la Nación; Juan B. Iguíniz, Jefe de la Sección de Bibliografía, and his associates in La Biblioteca Nacional de México; Manuel Romero de Terreros, Director del Patronato, and Dario Rubio, Secretario del Patronato, of El Nacional Monte de Piedad; and Silvio Zavala, Director, and Martínez Cosío of El Museo Nacional de Historia, Arqueología y Etnología de México. The assistance of the various officials of El Archivo Militar and La Biblioteca de Guerra de la Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, La Biblioteca de Relaciones Exteriores, the Benjamin Franklin Library, the National Archives,

and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., is greatly appreciated.

Diego Ortega y Roa, great-grandnephew of President Herrera, was particularly coöperative in making available the materials and information at his disposal and expressed much interest in the outcome of this endeavor. Señora Carmen García Maza, in whose home we lived in Mexico City, was kind enough to assist with difficult translations and to aid me in meeting certain individuals. I want to thank my brother, Robert Cotner, for reading several chapters, and I am deeply indebted to my wife, Jeanne, who worked with me in Mexico in gathering materials and in proofreading this dissertation. Acknowledgment is also made of the assistance given by Beatrice Newhall of the Editorial Staff of the Pan American Union in preparation for publication.

T.E.C.

The University of Texas
Austin, Texas
August, 1946

Contents

Preface vii

Chapter

I. Genealogy 1
II. The Royalist Officer, 1809–1820 9
III. Herrera and Iturbide: Independence and the First Empire, 1820–1823 32
IV. Herrera and Federalism, 1823–1834 57
V. From Political Oblivion to the Presidency, 1834–1844 90
VI. The First Administration of President José Joaquín de Herrera, 1844–1845 110
VII. Herrera During the War Years, 1846–1848 152
VIII–XII. The Problems of the Second Administration of President José Joaquín de Herrera, 1848–1851:
- VIII. Political and Financial Problems 172
- IX. Racial Warfare 221
- X. Diplomatic Relations 245
- XI. Religion, Education, and General Progress 278
- XII. Military Reform and Colonization 299

XIII. The Last Years, 1851–1854 316

Bibliography 323

Index 331

CHAPTER I

Genealogy

The reign of Charles II, 1665 to 1700, marked the end of an increasingly degenerate line of Spanish Hapsburgs. The bewitched and witless Charles, who had no heirs, was forced by the master of Europe, Louis XIV of France, to bequeath his throne to the youthful Duke of Anjou, the grandson of Louis. Upon the passing of Charles II, the young duke ascended the Spanish throne in 1701 as Philip V, the first of the Bourbon kings of Spain. In order to keep the peace and balance of power in Europe, the discomfited Austrian Hapsburgs were placated somewhat with the promise that the crowns of Spain and France would never be united and placed on one head.

The Spain which Philip V inherited was economically, socially, and politically unsound. Her armies, once the terror of European battlefields, were now futile and without prestige. The fleet, which at one time had threatened to overwhelm England, consisted of twenty outmoded vessels. The treasury was depleted. Owing to the expulsion of Moslems and Jews, upon whom the industrial wealth of the nation largely depended, there remained a population of some six millions in the homeland, where there were few roads and little commerce, agriculture, and industry. The social structure was in a stagnant state, being dominated by a fanatical clergy and an incompetent and haughty aristocracy which, instead of being an asset to the king, had become a parasite, sapping the strength of the nation.

Philip V attacked the problems of reorganization and rehabilitation of Spanish power and prestige with energy and vigor. As might be expected, his efforts were conditioned by the French system and influence, but his reforms were so effective that he left to his successor, Ferdinand VI, a resurgent Spain more virile and powerful than it had been since the golden era of Philip II.

One of the means by which this transformation was effected was the transfusion of new blood into the veins of an anemic nobility. A number of new nobles were created, with the titles going to those who had served the king well or who could strengthen the hand of the Bourbon ruler. Among those so honored for meritorious service to the crown was Don Pedro de Herrera y Cabello, native of Melilla, and the grandfather of the future president of the Mexican republic, José Joaquín de Herrera.[1] Don Pedro was given the title of *hijo-dalgo,* or *hidalgo,* by Philip V—the literal meaning indicating "son of someone" of pure or noble blood. This meant also that not only Don Pedro's immediate family would enjoy the rights and privileges which this title entailed, but that the title, rights, and privileges were granted in perpetuity to his heirs and descendants.

Don Pedro had married Doña Adriana del Campo y Cabrera, of distinguished family background. Among the several children born to this union was a son, José Agustín de Herrera y Campo. This son was the future father of the subject of our consideration, José Joaquín de Herrera, and was born in the city of Melilla on September 22, 1712.[2] José was to lead a long and interesting life. Although he was fifty-seven years old when he came to New Spain, life in many ways was just beginning for him. He arrived in Vera Cruz the 22nd of December, 1769, with the express purpose of marrying Doña María Josefa González, whose family had come to the New World some time previously. Don José and Doña María were married there within a few days after his arrival, on January 9, 1770.[3] In order to escape the plagues and fevers of Vera Cruz, they made their home in the beautiful city of Jalapa, or "Water on the Sands."[4] They lived happily together for ten years until María died in Jalapa on October 25, 1779, probably of smallpox, since one of her daughters had died of the disease a few days earlier. There were six children by this marriage. Don José, who was as adventuresome as he was prolific, was to be married three times and was to have a total of seventeen children.

In a matter of months, José de Herrera took his second wife. He was married in Vera Cruz on February 26, 1780, to Doña

---

[1] Ricardo Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, "Familia Bárcena," 34–39, in his *Historia genealógica de las familias más antiguas de México,* Tomo III. The pagination of these volumes is not continuous throughout. Each family history is numbered separately.

[2] *Ibid.* He was baptized five days later, September 27, 1712.

[3] Diego Ortega y Roa, great-grandnephew of José Joaquín de Herrera, in an interview on March 28, 1946, stated to the author that José Agustín Herrera was a moderately wealthy man, who brought with him from Spain about 50,000 pesos in gold and silver.

[4] W. H. Callcott in his book, *Santa Anna, The Story of an Enigma Who Once Was Mexico,* 1, describes Jalapa as follows: "Nestling at a height of four thousand feet above the pestilential tropics that made Veracruz so feared for long periods each year, it became a place of refuge and a site for the permanent homes of the wealthier classes."

Ana Apolinaria Ricardos y Iberri.[5] His second wife also bore six children—four boys and two girls. The fourth son and fifth child of this marriage was born February 23, 1792, in Jalapa in what is now the state of Vera Cruz. His father recorded the event in his diary, or "Memorias," in these words:

> The year 1792—the 23rd day of February at eleven-thirty in the morning my son was born, who was baptized here that night in the Old Parish [Antigua Parroquia] by its Vicar, Don Manuel García Campomanes; his godfather was Don Eduardo Alzazua, and he was christened José Joaquín Antonio Florencio.[6]

José Joaquín's eldest brother was born in December, 1780, and was given the name of Francisco. The second son arrived in February, 1782, and was named Rafaél. Antonio María, the next child, died at birth in January, 1783; the same tragic result attended in May of the following year the birth of the first daughter, María del Rosario. The premature birth of a daughter, Juana, at six months, resulted in the untimely death of both mother and child on July 1, 1795. Doña Ana was only thirty-three years old, having been born in Panzacola, July 23, 1761. The high mortality rate of that period is apparent in this family with only three of the six children living at the time of their mother's death. Heartbroken, Don José, in writing in his diary of the passing of his "beloved wife," said that the only children living by Doña Ana were "Francisco who is studying in Orizaba and Rafaél and José Joaquín who are at home."[7]

Home was now in Perote, a town smaller than Jalapa and located about thirty-six miles to the west on the road to Mexico City. Don José had gone to Perote in December, 1794, to accept a viceregal appointment as *administrador de correos*, or postmaster, of that city. As soon as the necessary preparations could be made, he moved his family to Perote in February of the next year. In those days such an appointment represented a certain political and social eminence and meant that the family was in above-average financial circumstances. He also operated an apothecary shop which was an additional source of income.

Notwithstanding the fact that Don José was eighty-four years old, he entered into matrimony for the third time. He contracted marriage with Doña María Gertrudis de Rivas y Rodríguez Roa early in 1796. The marriage had been arranged by the prospective bride's family through correspondence. The young Doña María waited and wondered what sort of person her future husband would be. When she saw him for the first time from a window as he alighted from a coach, she apparently was favorably impressed. She wrote to her aunt that "I have seen Herrera and I like him very much."[8] Four-year-old Don José Joaquín had a stepmother. He was also to be presented with five additional half brothers and sisters before his father's death. The exact date of Don José's passing is not known, but the last entry in his diary is marked 1808. This would mean that this loyal and sturdy representative of the Spanish crown had lived to the unusual age of ninety-six.[9]

---

[5] Ricardo Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, "Familia Bárcena," 36–37, in his *Historia genealógica*, III.

[6] *Ibid.* Herrera's baptismal certificate could not be located but his certificate of confirmation at the age of sixteen was found in the Parroquia de Perote, Diocese of Vera Cruz.

[7] Ricardo Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, "Familia Bárcena," 36–37, in his *Historia genealógica*, III.

Another branch of the Herrera family received even higher honors and titles from the crown than that of *hidalgo*. In 1790, Charles IV, by the grace of God, King of Castile, of Aragon, of the two Sicilies, of Jerusalem, of Navarre, of Granada, of Toledo . . . of the East and West Indies, islands and lands of the Ocean Sea, Archduke of Austria, Count of Hapsburg, etc., conferred the first title of Marqués de Herrera and Vizconde de Santo Domingo upon his most loyal subject, Don Vicente de Herrera.[10] Don Vicente, who was the nephew of Don José de Herrera and cousin of José Joaquín de Herrera, well deserved this expression of regal confidence and approval. He was a caballero, or knight, of Charles III; he had served as regent of the royal *audiencia* of Mexico and had held the high position of president of the Supreme Council of the Indies prior to receiving the title of marquis and viscount. King Charles IV stated in his royal decree of November 9, 1790, by which the titles were granted, that Don Vicente had rendered "distinguished service" in the above positions of trust, particularly "during the vacancy in the viceroyalty of Mexico on the death of Don Matías de Gálvez" when the king depended heavily upon him as regent of the royal *audiencia* of

---

[8] Interview of the author with Diego Ortega y Roa, great-grandnephew of José Joaquín de Herrera, on March 28, 1946.

[9] Ricardo Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, "Familia Bárcena," 29, 38–39, in his *Historia genealógica*, III. It seems odd that Don José would come to New Spain at the age of fifty-seven and be married for the first time at that late date. However, the date of birth was given in two places as 1712, and it was a common practice for men to wait until they were past forty to be married.

[10] Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," 1, in his *Historia genealógica*, II. Charles IV reminded Vicente that the *lanzas* and *medias anatas*, taxes due the king, were payable in advance.

Mexico.[11] In implementing this decree, the king commanded that "my beloved son, Prince Ferdinand, the nobles, the judges and all my subjects accord to Don Vicente all the rights, privileges, honors, and ceremonies due to a person of his rank." These titles were given not only to Don Vicente but also to his "children, descendants, and successors."[12]

The coat of arms of the first Marqués, which was later modified with the passing years, was rather interesting and colorful. It consisted of a large, dark green eagle with wings and talons outspread. Superimposed on the eagle was a bright red shield, bordered by twelve golden cauldrons with two larger ones also of gold in the center. Resting on the eagle's head was a gold crown trimmed in silver, green, and red.[13]

Upon the death of Don Vicente, his wife, Doña Dolores Romero de Terreros y Trebuesto, became the second Marquesa de Herrera. She was already in her own right the Marquesa de San Fernando. It was not long until she was married again to Don Manuel de la Pedreguera y Morales. The title of Marqués de Herrera then passed to their son, Don Manuel de la Pedreguera y Romero de Terreros, who was born in Madrid, Spain, on June 25, 1802. The third Marqués died in Mexico the 22nd of August, 1874, leaving no heirs. It was at this point that the family of Don Pedro, Don José, and Don José Joaquín de Herrera became successors to the titles of Marqués de Herrera and Vizconde de Santo Domingo. The fourth Marquesa was Doña Dolores de Herrera y Alzugaray, daughter of the general and former president, José Joaquín de Herrera.[14] A cousin of Doña Dolores, Doña Carmen Roa y Alcalde, claimed the title of fifth Marquesa.[15] She had in her possession, in 1910, a rosary of fine gold filigree which was given by the first Marqués to his uncle, Don José de Herrera y Campo. The rosary, as well as the *banda* and Grand Cross of the Order of San Gregorio which Pope Pius IX gave to President Herrera,

---

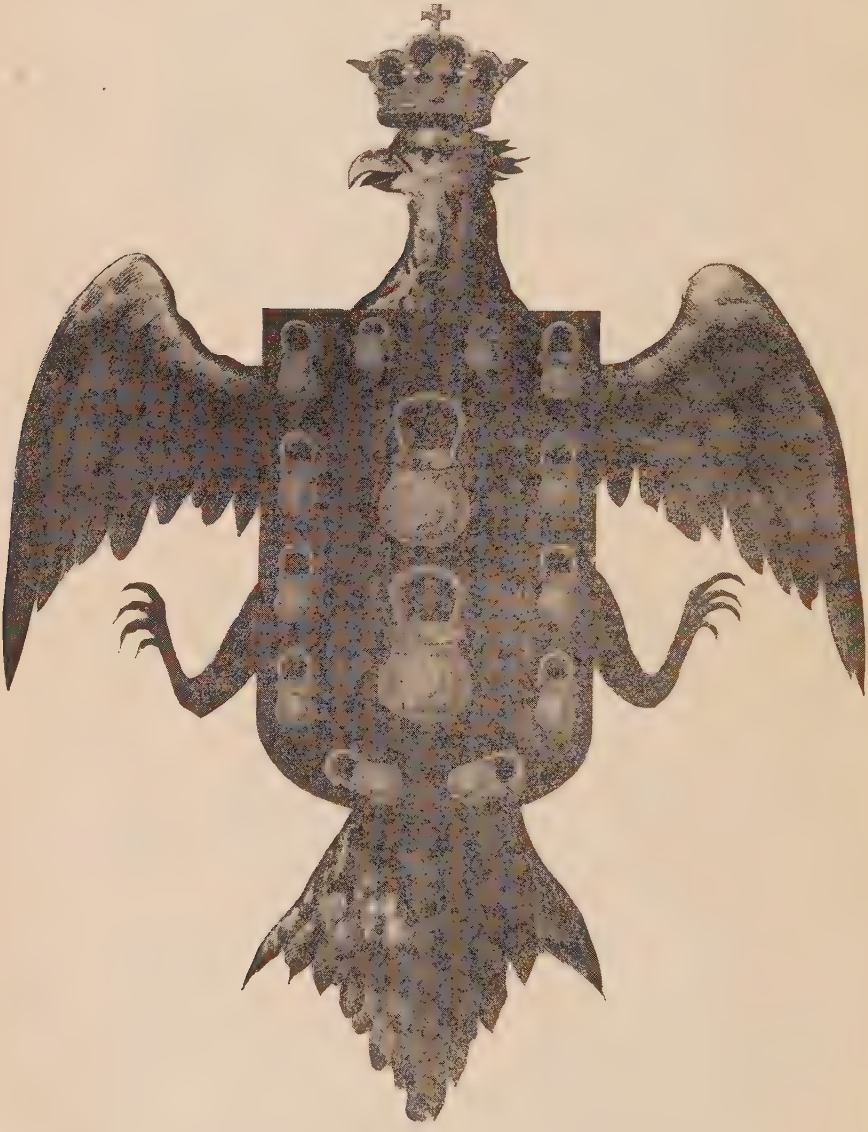
[11] Royal decree of King Charles IV, November 9, 1790, quoted in Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," 2, in his *Historia genealógica*, II.

[12] Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera, 3, in his *Historia genealógica*, II.

[13] See following page for coat of arms of the first Marqués de Herrera. It was described as: "De gules y dos calderos de oro; bordura del mismo color cargada de doce calderos del mismo metal." Ortega, "Familia Bárcena," 54, in his *Historia genealógica*, III.

[14] Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," 5, in his *Historia genealógica*, II. President Herrera never held the title of marquis and count himself. The general married Doña Dolores Alzugaray in Córdoba in 1835. They had two children, José Joaquín and Dolores. Dolores, outliving her brother, inherited the title. The son was a colonel during the time of the French intervention and fought in the battle of May 5, 1862. He was captured by the French and sent to Martinique. He returned to Mexico the following year and died some years later. Neither child left heirs.

[15] Ricardo Ortega lists Doña Carmen as a niece *(sobrina)* of Doña Dolores. This term must have been used loosely. To have been a niece, she would have had to have been the daughter of Doña Dolores' only brother, the



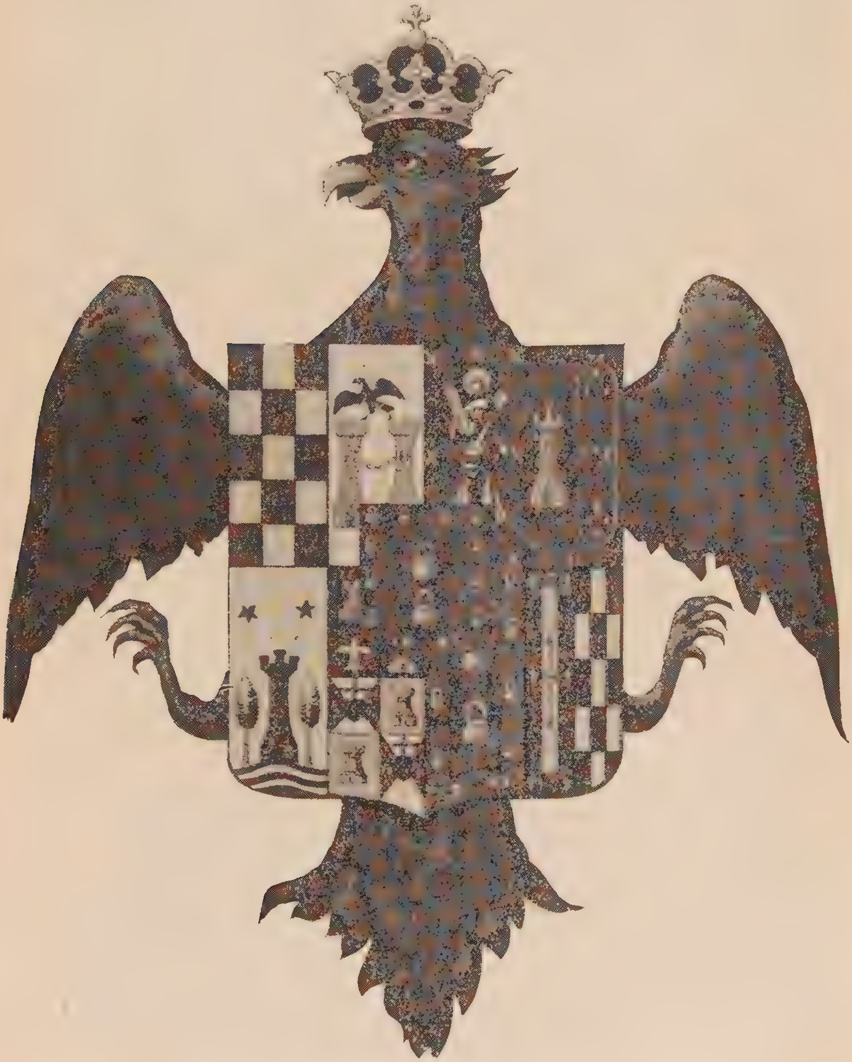
Armas Del Primer Marqués de Herrera

and other family treasures are now held by Diego Ortega y Roa, great-grandnephew of the president and son of Doña Carmen.[16]

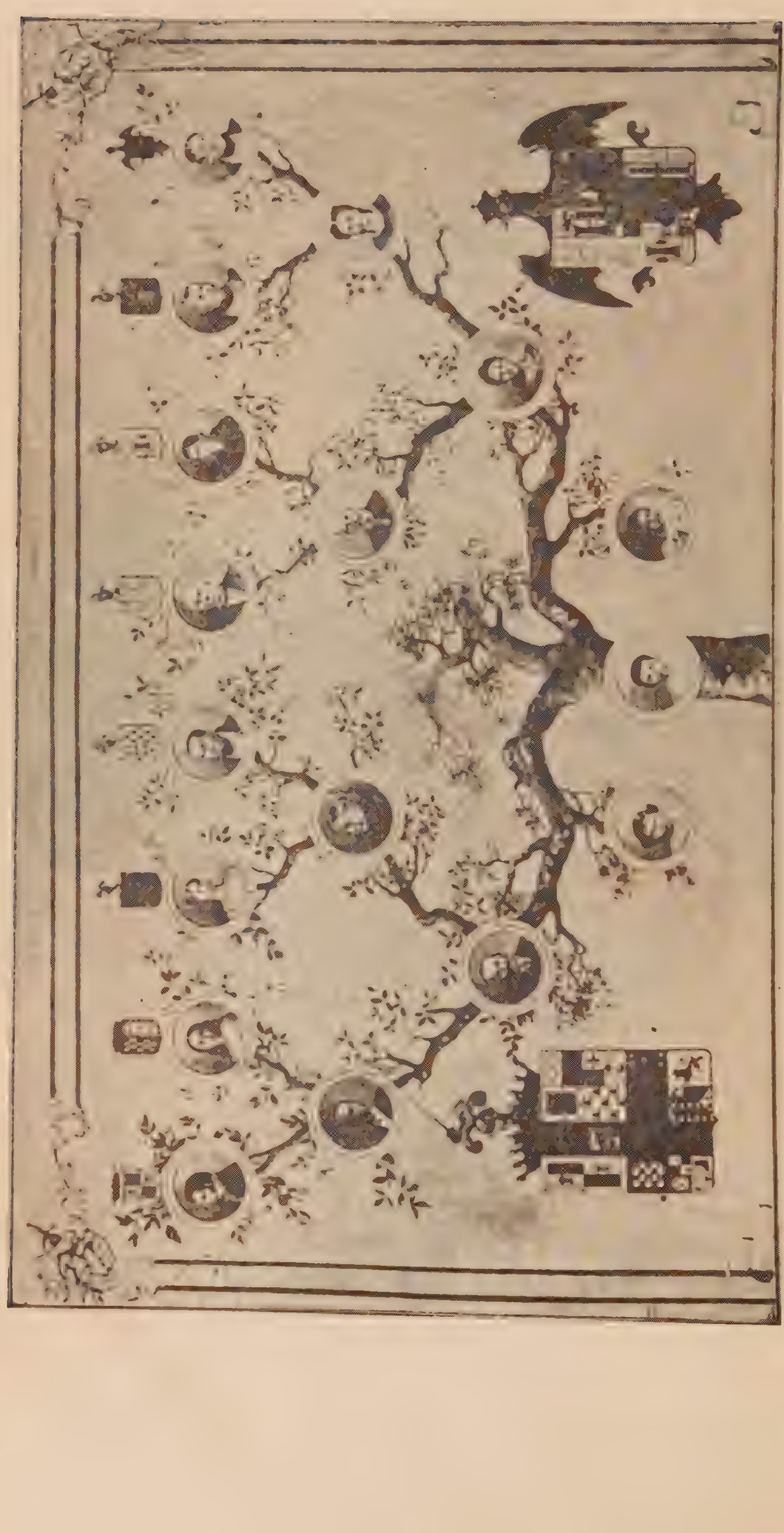
---

younger José Joaquín Herrera, who had no children. Ricardo Ortega, himself, married the fifth Marquesa, and lists as her grandmother the half sister of President Herrera. Thus, she was a cousin of Doña Dolores.

[16] A genealogical tree of the Diego Ortega y Roa family is shown on the following page. It is interesting to note that President José Joaquín Herrera's picture appears in the upper right inset. This place should be filled by Herrera's half sister, Doña Ana María de Herrera, who married Diego M. Alcalde. They were the great-grandparents of Diego Ortega (lower center).



Armas de la Quinta Marquesa de Herrera



The Genealogical Tree of the Diego Ortega y Roa Family

CHAPTER II

The Royalist Officer, 1809–1820

José Joaquín de Herrera spent his childhood and adolescent years with his family in San Miguel Perote. Those years undoubtedly were passed in the usual, uneventful, happy fashion, with his activities centered in his school, the village church, and his home and family. He was reared in the royalist tradition, having a grandfather who had been made an *hidalgo* by Philip V and a cousin who could claim the titles of marquis and viscount. Since his own father held an official position in Perote, as postmaster, young José Joaquín might have been expected to have an admiration for viceregal appointees in the New World, respect for the Spanish governing system, and a pride in the smartly performed maneuvers of the royalist troops. He was also a serious and very religious boy, characteristics he was to retain throughout a long political and military career. His confirmation in the Parroquia de Perote was recorded as taking place February 9, 1808, with Don José Antonio Lasola acting as his *padrino*.[1]

It was customary in Mexico for sons of noble blood to lean toward a military or a clerical career. These two courses offered the greatest security and possibilities for advancement and well-being. If one aspired to royal appointment to public office, the best recommendation and background was obviously to have been an officer with an enviable service record in the royalist army. With an eye to the future, José Joaquín's father must have pointed out the multiple opportunities that made an officer's career attractive, particularly since creoles were excluded from most of the highest offices in favor of those born in Spain. Of course, the bright uniforms, the parades, and the martial music doubtless had their own appeal for a boy of seventeen. He was, therefore, elated when he received the coveted appointment of cadet in the *Regimiento de la Corona,* or Crown Regiment, on November 3, 1809.[2]

---

[1] Fe de Confirmación del Señor General Don José Joaquin de Herrera, given in Ricardo Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, "Familia Bárcena," 32, in his *Historia genealógica,* Tomo III. The presiding cleric was Don Manuel María González del Campillo. Herrera was sixteen years old at the time.

[2] *Expediente de Gral. José Joaquín Herrera,* Caja Número 83, Archivo Militar, Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional de México, Tomo I, Doc. No. 524,

Little did the young cadet realize that, in accepting this appointment, he was beginning a military career which was to carry him through one of the most dangerously interesting periods in Mexican history, the wars for independence. Yet too youthful to appreciate and understand the powerful revolutionary forces at work, he could have had no inkling of what the future had in store. Moreover, the scene looked peaceful enough. As the eminent Mexican historian, José C. Valadés, has written:

> When the year 1810 began, silence reigned in New Spain. . . . Anyone living in this life of peace and tranquillity, who should have predicted a turbulent future for New Spain, would have been taken for a diabolical spirit.[3]

But external appearances did not indicate the pulsating undercurrents of liberal thought, the desire of creoles and *mestizos* for equal political and social standing with the *gachupines,* and the underlying hatred of the *indios* for their Spanish masters, to whom they were forced to pay tribute.[4]

At seventeen, Herrera was only vaguely aware of the possible consequence to Spain and her colonies of the liberalizing events in England, France, and the United States. England was the cradle of liberal ideology. There the properties of the Catholic Church had been seized, and religious toleration had been established. A king had been beheaded, and his successors had been forced to observe the restrictions of parliamentary government. This wave of liberal feeling had spread to France, where its proponents had fought a vigorous battle against despotism for the recognition of human rights. The resultant French Revolution

---

Hoja de servicios. Herrera's *Expediente,* or military record, consists of four folders of official correspondence, battles, promotions, leaves, honors, and public offices held. The documents in these folders have apparently been rearranged several times and have been given as many as three different filing numbers. However, they are arranged more or less in chronological sequence and can be readily located by volume number and date.

[3] José C. Valadés, *Alamán, estadista e historiador,* 35–36.

[4] *Gachupines, or peninsulares,* were Spaniards of pure blood, born in Spain. This class held all the worth-while positions in New Spain and enjoyed a social exclusiveness as well as many special privileges denied the other groups of society. The *criollos,* or creoles, were likewise of pure Spanish blood but had the misfortune of having been born in the New World. They were allowed a few positions of importance, such as a limited number of commissions in the royal army, but those of the greatest importance were always filled by *gachupines.* The *mestizos* were of mixed Spanish and Indian blood and were one step lower in the social scale. The *indios* or Indians had practically no rights of any kind, except "to obey and be silent."

of 1789, with its uncontrolled fury, reign of terror, and dictatorship, brought forth a new social order. The kingship was swept away, and sovereign heads again rolled in the streets. In North America the English colonies had rebelled against a lesser tyranny than that imposed on Mexico and the other Spanish colonies to the South. Spain had endeavored to prevent the spread of the revolutionary virus to her colonies by prohibiting the immigration of foreigners, by enforcing a strict censorship of literature and press, and by the fanatical use of the Inquisition to stamp out suspected heresy. In spite of her most diligent efforts, knowledge of these wars for political and human independence and the liberal idealism which engendered them penetrated the seclusive Spanish barrier. Creole and *mestizo* philosophers somehow obtained smuggled versions of Voltaire and of Jefferson's Declaration of Independence and began to dream of the overthrow of Spanish tyranny and the creation of an independent republic, based on justice and equality.[5]

The movement for Mexican independence, however, was not a spontaneous uprising of all the people to effect separation from Spain. Ultimate independence was to be more the result of political events in Spain than of a general desire in New Spain for separation.[6] Justification of the movement, however, was to be based on three centuries of Spanish colonial misrule.

The colonial system presented many causes for complaint. The king was very far away and, regardless of how benevolent he might be, his agents in the persons of the viceroy and other officials usually did not possess this virtue. The court system had become corrupt and incompetent. The clerical, as well as the government offices, were reserved for those born in the homeland. Spain maintained a strict monopoly of trade and commerce, imposing a complexity of import and export duties. Internal commerce was discouraged and roads were poor. Religion in the highest circles was allied with the aristocracy to oppress the masses and to maintain an antiquated political and social order. Graft and the sale of offices were the rule, not the exception. The wealth of New Spain flowed in streams of gold and silver into the royal coffers, only to be dissipated in various European wars. It became more and more obvious that the colonies existed only for the benefit of the mother country.

Added to these causes of just complaint was the administrative and political confusion brought about by the French intervention in Spain. Napoleon enlisted the cupidity of Manuel Godoy, Spanish foreign minister, in a proposed partition of Portugal. French troops were to have the right of passage through northern Spain to reach their objective. It soon became apparent that the conquest of Portugal in 1807 was not the only extension of power Napoleon had in mind. His troops who had been poured into Spain were not removed. King Charles IV of Spain, feeling himself helplessly alone on the continent, refused to wage war against the dictator. As a way out of his dilemma, he suddenly abdicated his throne on March 19, 1808. "His popular son became king as Ferdinand VII."[7] Napoleon again had other plans. On the pretext of discussing problems relating to the succession, Napoleon lured Charles and Ferdinand to meet him in the French territory of Bayonne. Both were made prisoners and forced to give up their claims to the Spanish throne. This prepared the way for Napoleon's original plan of giving the crown to his brother, Joseph Bonaparte.

---

[5] H. B. Parkes, *A History of Mexico*, 133–135.

[6] H. I. Priestley, *The Mexican Nation, A History*, 192.

Ferdinand VII, however, was idolized by his people. While that over-rated and unappreciative sovereign played tennis as a captive of Napoleon in France, his Spanish subjects carried on a bitter and tenacious guerrilla warfare against the French invader. This "Spanish ulcer" so weakened Napoleonic power as to contribute considerably to his final downfall in 1814–1815. During these seven years, the Spanish people and those of the Spanish colonies patiently and lovingly awaited the return of Ferdinand, holding his throne in trust for him. However, during this time the local juntas of New Spain were to enjoy a large measure of independent action, due to the impossible circumstances of successful administration surrounding the central *cortes* of Spain.[8] This taste of political independence, coupled with the disillusionment that came with Ferdinand's return, was to have an important bearing on the final act of the war for separation from the mother country.

While the Spanish *cortes* and colonial juntas were engaged in disputes over jurisdictional control, a similar struggle was being waged on a smaller scale in Mexico City between the creole *ayun-*

---

[7] *Ibid.*, 197.

[8] Juntas were local governing councils. The juntas of New Spain claimed the right to govern in the absence of Ferdinand since Mexico and the other Spanish colonies were not adequately represented in the central *cortes* which was the provincial representative assembly in Spain. Both bodies insisted that they were exercising power only in the name and absence of King Ferdinand.

tamiento and the royal *audiencia*.[9] The *ayuntamiento* demanded that a creole junta be elected to represent the interests of New Spain while the *audiencia*, as representatives of *gachupín* desires, insisted that the junta of Seville in Spain be recognized. When it appeared that the viceroy, Iturrigaray, intended to side with the creoles, the *gachupines*, under the leadership of a planter from Cuernavaca named Yermo, captured the viceroy in his palace on the night of September 15, 1808.[10] The next day a new viceroy was nominated by the *audiencia* in the person of Pedro de Garibay, an aged soldier, before the surprised creoles knew what had occurred. Iturrigaray was put on board a ship for Spain, and his properties were seized. Seven of the creole leaders were imprisoned, and two of the more outspoken were allowed to die there.

The creoles continued their efforts to obtain self-government through secret societies, such as the "Guadalupes." It was obvious to all, after the *coup d'etat* of September 15, that the local government of Mexico City was nothing more than a *gachupín* tyranny. Since the *gachupines* were so few in number, it would have been a relatively easy matter to have liberated Mexico from Spanish rule at that time through a union of creoles, *mestizos*, and Indians and almost without bloodshed. This, unfortunately, was not to be the case. Many creoles were not prepared as yet to take the momentous step. As for the Indians, their intense feeling against the oppressor included both creole and *gachupín* without distinction. There was no plan or program, and no common ground was presented whereby these forces could be united in 1808.

In his second year as a cadet in the Crown Regiment, José Joaquín de Herrera no doubt viewed these developments with mingled feelings. As a creole, he was in sympathy with the creole demands for representation, equality, and self-government. As a member of the royalist troops, he was by oath duty-bound to obey orders, which meant the support of *gachupín* domination, and to maintain a loyalty to the Spanish government as defined by his Spanish officers. As a result, he followed the course that many other young creoles elected at that time—that of remaining in the loyalist forces. Among those of particular note who did this were Agustín Iturbide, later author of the *Plan de Iguala*, and Antonio López de Santa Anna, also a future supporter of final independence and many times president of Mexico.[11]

---

[9] The *ayuntamiento* was an elective town council, dominated by creoles. The *audiencia* was the appointive royal court favoring the *gachupín* interests.

[10] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 142.

Meanwhile, in Spain, a new government composed of three regents had been established. Their headquarters were on the island of León, since the whole of Spain was in the hands of the French. The regents appointed a new viceroy, Venegas, who arrived in Mexico to take over his duties on September 14, 1810, only two days before Hidalgo initiated the first phase of the War of Independence.

In Querétaro, a group of creoles had formed a social and literary club for the purpose of discussing ideas of independence. They were not republicans, nor were they opposed to the church. They proposed "that the creoles, while still acknowledging King Ferdinand, should no longer be governed by *gachupín* officials."[12] Mexico was also to enjoy an equal status with Spain within the empire. The leaders of this group included the *corregidor* of Querétaro, Miguel Domínguez, his wife, Doña Josefa María Ortiz, Captain Juan Aldama, and Ignacio Allende. Allende was responsible for adding to the club's membership the parish priest of Dolores, Miguel Hidalgo y Costillo. Hidalgo was a man nearing sixty, well educated, and a devotee of the principles of the French Revolution. His liberal ideas had already aroused the suspicions of the Inquisition. As a humanitarian, he was greatly distressed by the oppression and misery of the Indians. This feeling of compassion for the Indian had almost disappeared among the clergy of Mexico, particularly in the higher ranks of the robe. Hidalgo has been described as:

> Rather above than below medium height, of somewhat stout proportions, large limbs and ruddy-brown complexion, he presented altogether a robust appearance. The head was large and well modelled, bald and shining on the top, with many brain-compelling bumps; hair, what there was of it, nearly white; massive features; forehead of course high, neck slightly twisted to the left, nose straight, lips thin, eyebrows prominent, and as usual with the cloth, face clean-shaven. . . . His heart was kind and sympathetic; his manner soft and winning; his voice sonorous, vibrating, and most pleasing to the ear; and his deportment was natural and attractive. He had the true scholarly stoop; and in all his features, air, and attitude a profoundly meditative expression—a fitting incarnation of a great soul bathed in settled

---

[11] Santa Anna was also born in Jalapa, being two years younger than Herrera. Their paths were to cross and recross many times in more or less parallel military and political careers. Two personalities, however, could not have been more completely different.

[12] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 146.

calm. Yet the clear, black, brilliant eyes betrayed the activity of the mind, and through them shone the light from the burning fires within.[13]

Hidalgo became the spiritual leader of the dissident group, while Allende and Aldama furnished the military talent. The plan was to win the support of the creoles in the various towns and particularly those who were officers in the army. Had the original plan succeeded, enough converts might have been won to have expelled the *gachupines* with little bloodshed. The conspirators planned to make a declaration of Mexican independence in December, 1810, during the great fair of San Juan de los Lagos. Their plans were betrayed, and the *corregidor* was imprisoned. His wife warned Allende, who made a ride on horseback, reminiscent of that of Paul Revere, to Dolores to apprise Hidalgo of the dangerous turn of events.

Hidalgo decided to act immediately. Ringing the bell of the church to assemble his Indian parishioners, he sounded the "grito de Dolores" on the morning of September 16, 1810, and announced that the time had come to overthrow the *gachupín* despotism. He stated that the *gachupines* were planning to recognize Joseph Bonaparte and to betray their religion to the French.[14] The Indians armed themselves with axes, knives, *machetes,* clubs, and slings, and set out to liberate Mexico. In the next village they took a picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe from the church, and this became the banner of the Indian revolution.[15]

The Spaniards were taken by surprise, and it took some little time for the viceroy, Venegas, and General Calleja to organize their forces. Meanwhile, the followers of Hidalgo increased daily in number. After occupying San Miguel, Hidalgo was joined by Allende's regiment. Celaya was captured with the greatest confusion. The Indians were not used to discipline, and there was none.

---

[13] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Mexico,* 1804–1824, Vol. XII, pp. 103–104.

[14] Parkes, *op. cit.,* 146.

[15] The following is part of the poem, "El grito de Dolores," by Francisco Sosa in *Romances de la guerra de independencia, Biblioteca Enciclopédica Popular* published by the Secretaría de Educación Pública, Vol. 71, p. 11.

Hidalgo se les presenta
Erguida la frente noble,
Reflejando en la mirada
Puro, indefinible goce.
'Sabed, les dice, hijos míos,
Que si el cielo nos socorre,
La libertad a la Patria
Vamos a dar, los albores
Del dieciseis de Septiembre
Brillarán cuando los hombres
Que en nuestro pecho sentimos
Que sangre de libres corre,
Habremos todos jurado
De tiranos españoles
Hacer a la Patria libre
A la faz de todo el orbe! . . .

> They battered down the doors of the *gachupines* and the wealthy creoles, ransacked their houses, and plundered their possessions. Allende was horrified by the disorder; he had anticipated a military rebellion and seen himself as a general leading his army to victory; but what was happening was a social revolution. . . . The *gachupines* had to pay for the crimes of Alvarado and Nuño de Guzmán, and of ten generations of *encomenderos* and *hacendados*, of mine-owners and *corregidores*.[16]

The capital of the intendancy, Guanajuato, was next attacked. *Gachupines* and creoles under the command of Riaño, the intendant, gathered in the large stone granary, known as the *Alhóndiga de Granaditas*, for protection. The defense went well until Riaño was killed by a chance shot. While his subordinates were arguing about who would now be in command, a Guanajuato miner set fire to the wooden door. The Indian troops soon effected an entrance. Acts of extreme barbarism ensued.

> The victors now rush forward into every part of the building killing without mercy and without discrimination. Surrendered soldiers are cut down, and civilians who have secreted themselves among the stores are dragged forth and ruthlessly butchered. . . . Pillage is next in order. From the living, the dying, and the dead, the clothes are torn. The storerooms are ransacked and the treasures carried off, the plunderers fighting among themselves for the spoils. What a sight is here, oh God! and all for liberty, all for tyranny; liberty or tyranny among some, with others, glory, gold, or plunder.[17]

Events at Guanajuato made an indelible impression on José Joaquín de Herrera and many other creoles. The plundering of estates by the Indians and the massacre at the Alhóndiga made plain the only safe course open to the creoles who possessed any wealth whatsoever. Political differences between creoles and *gachupines* were almost forgotten in an effort to restore law and order. They united with *un gran abrazo*. This was necessary in order to prevent the complete destruction of society as they knew it. Lack of discipline and control had caused the original plan of Hidalgo to backfire; instead of winning creole support, he had alienated the majority of creoles completely.

---

[16] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 147. Hidalgo suddenly realized what destructive forces of racial hatred he had unleashed. It was useless to try to hold back the floodwaters. He accepted the means to effect the end—the liberation of Mexico.

[17] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 150–151. The family of Lucas Alamán lived in Guanajuato. His mother paid a personal visit to Hidalgo to seek protection, finding him still friendly "as of yester years." The terrible horror of what the young Lucas Alamán saw that day stayed with him all his life. Undoubtedly, it was responsible for his inherent distrust of the masses and for his later ultra-conservatism. Valadés, *Alamán*, 43–44.

Viceroy Venegas now saw that the rebellion was a full scale revolution. He began to mobilize his forces, which consisted largely of *mestizos* commanded by creoles. Such was the case of the Crown Regiment to which Herrera belonged. This regiment was directly under the command of General Felix María Calleja and was to see its first important action against the insurgents at Aculco. After Hidalgo's forces had won a doubtful victory over General Trujillo at Monte de las Cruces, the way had been open for an attack on Mexico City; but Hidalgo, remembering the experience of Guanajuato, refused to give his consent for the attack. As a result, his forces, diminished somewhat by desertion, retreated toward Querétaro. Calleja's troops were marching in the same direction, neither force aware of the other's presence. On November 7, 1810, the opposing armies made contact at Aculco. The order and discipline of the loyalist troops triumphed over the greater manpower of the insurgents. Herrera and the Crown Regiment were in the thick of the fighting.[18] The loyalists lost only one man killed and one wounded and they captured "all of Hidalgo's cannon, ammunition, and baggage, a large number of cattle, sheep, and horses, and a quantity of merchandise."[19]

Herrera also took part in the recapture of Guanajuato by Calleja's forces on November 24 and 25, 1810.[20] Calleja discovered that a narrow pass on the road to the city had been mined by the insurgents. Herrera's career might well have ended here had this discovery not been made in time. Many hours of bitter fighting finally dislodged the forces of Allende from the heights outside the city. Loyalist casualties were few, considering the severity of the battle. As Allende retreated, the mob in Guanajuato ran wild, breaking into the Alhóndiga and murdering the Spaniards left there as prisoners by Hidalgo some weeks previously. When Calleja entered the city, he was enraged at the barbarous massacre of the helpless prisoners. He promptly had the local carpenters to erect gallows, and twenty-three persons were sentenced to death.[21] Herrera witnessed these acts of bloody cruelty and must have wondered who was right and who was to blame.

---

[18] *Expediente de Gral. José Joaquín Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. No. 524. *Hoja de servicios.*

[19] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 201. So accurate was the aim of the loyalist artillery that the firing lasted only twenty-two minutes. Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos, *Colección de documentos para la historia de la guerra de independencia de México de 1808 á 1821,* II, Doc. 156, p. 275.

[20] *Expediente de Gral. José Joaquín Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. 236; *Anales del museo nacional,* series 2, Vol. IV, 395.

[21] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 225–227; Parkes, *op. cit.*, 151.

> If we condemn the massacres of one, we must those of the other. Even though Hidalgo fights for liberty and Calleja for tyranny if we are disposed to overlook the barbarity of the former in letting loose his Indians on the Spaniards, we must not expect otherwise in regard to the latter than that he will retaliate as opportunity offers. Men are so made. It is idle to argue the point on which side of this war the greatest cruelty was displayed. . . . Both sides were about as blood-thirsty as they could be.[22]

Not only were the insurgents suffering defeats, but the disputes between Hidalgo and Allende had become so bitter that they had separated their forces. This breach had begun when Allende had urged a direct attack on Mexico City after the battle of Monte de las Cruces, and Hidalgo had refused.[23] This lack of coöperation was partly responsible for Allende's defeat at Guanajuato. After this reversal, Allende retreated to Zacatecas. He soon decided that, if there was to be any hope of success, he must join Hidalgo at Guadalajara in spite of their strained relations. Hoping to strike a final blow against the insurgents, General Calleja arrived in January with six thousand men, including the Crown Regiment. Hidalgo had eighty thousand, but they were poorly armed, virtually untrained, and undisciplined. Notwithstanding the advice of Allende, Hidalgo decided to risk all on a single throw. He led his whole army out of Guadalajara and waited for the loyalists at the bridge of Calderón, on the banks of the Lerma. On January 17, 1811, the battle of Puente de Calderón was fought. It was long and bitter with the balance of battle shifting back and forth, favoring one side and then the other. At one point, victory seemed assured for the insurgents when two desperate attacks by the loyalists failed. "Nothing but the ascendency of Calleja's presence, his coolness and military skill, saved the day."[24] The tide turned against Hidalgo when an ammunition wagon caught fire when royalist artillery made a direct hit. The fire spread rapidly in the dry, matted grass, and the wind blew dense clouds of smoke and flame through the ranks of the rebels. "Blinded by the smoke and terrified by the blaze, they were cut to pieces."[25] Cadet Herrera conducted himself with bravery and valor and received a *medalla de distinción* for the part he played in pressing the loyalist attack.[26]

---

[22] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 228.

[23] Letter of Allende to Hidalgo, November 19, 1810, from Hernández y Dávalos, *Colección de documentos*, II, Doc. 137, pp. 232–233, in which Allende protests Hidalgo's decision to march to Guadalajara rather than attack the capital.

[24] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 254.

[25] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 152; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 255.

The insurgent defeat at the bridge of Calderón ended Hidalgo's military leadership, which passed to Allende upon the insistence of the creole officers who had joined the movement. Allende decided to withdraw from central Mexico and retreat northward to join another comrade in arms, Jiménez, at Saltillo. He also planned to seek aid from the frontiersmen in the United States who were sympathetic with the cause of independence. From Saltillo, Hidalgo and Allende set out for the northern frontier with "a thousand men, fourteen coaches, and all the treasure which they had seized from the royal cash boxes and the *gachupines*."[27]

The expedition was never to reach its destination because of the treachery of a disgruntled creole officer, Elizondo, who betrayed his leaders. With his troops, Elizondo lay in wait on the road to Texas around the slope of a hill where he could not be seen. As each successive group rounded the hill, it was captured.[28] Juan Aldama, who had gone earlier to Texas to solicit aid, had been taken prisoner there, carried to Monclova, and shot. Following a summary military trial at Chihuahua, Allende and Jiménez were shot in the back as traitors. Hidalgo was first degraded from the priesthood and then turned over to the secular authorities. On July 31, 1811, the father of the independence movement was led before the firing squad.[29] The heads of Hidalgo, Allende, Aldama, and Jiménez were placed in iron cages on the four corners of the walls of the Alhóndiga in Guanajuato as grim reminders of what rebels might expect from Spain.

The loyalist leaders for a time assumed that the defeat of the insurgents at Calderón and the execution of their leaders meant the end of the rebellion. New leaders, however, were to arise to take their places. Ignacio Rayón, former secretary of state of the revolutionary government, found himself in command of the rebel forces until he was supplanted by a more skillful military commander in the person of José María Morelos. Rayón was in Zacatecas when he heard that Calleja was approaching. He left a small detachment in Zacatecas to retard Calleja's advance and proceeded toward Michoacán. Calleja divided his forces. One group under the command of Colonel Emparan was sent with six cannons to intercept Rayón. The other, led by Calleja personally, occupied Zacatecas on May 3, 1811. This force was unopposed since the rebel leader, Rosales, had accepted the offered pardon for himself and his troops.

---

[26] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 236.

[27] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 153.

[28] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 216. This occurred at a place called Acitita de Baján in February, 1811.

[29] During Hidalgo's stay in prison, he apparently felt remorse for the bloodshed and misery which his premature revolt had caused. The Spanish authorities displayed a retraction which Hidalgo was supposed to have signed, stating that Mexico was not ready for independence. The result could only be anarchy and confusion. The authorship of this document has been questioned. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 286–287.

Meanwhile, Emparan's troops overtook Rayón at the hacienda de Maguey. Herrera was in Emparan's division and took part in the ensuing battle of Lomas del Maguey on the same day that Calleja seized Zacatecas.

> The engagement which followed was most disastrous to the revolutionists. Though occupying a strong position on the adjacent ridge, they were routed on all sides, the artillery of the enemy opening upon them with telling precision. Rayón's troops were dispersed, his demoralized officers carrying off a great part of the treasure. Twenty pieces of artillery, and a quantity of muskets and ammunition, fell into the hands of the victors. More than 100 prisoners were captured, all of whom Emparan released except five, who were executed.[30]

Rayón had managed to escape with a large portion of his troops, and he hurried to Zitácuaro, where he proceeded to fortify the town with considerable skill. Around it he dug a ditch which could be filled with water from a dam at a moment's notice. Concentric barricades were constructed with cannons commanding all vulnerable points. Colonel Emparan was ordered by Viceroy Venegas to take Zitácuaro immediately in spite of the Colonel's warning that more time was needed in preparation for the attack. On June 19, 1811, Emparan arrived on the outskirts of the city with two thousand of Calleja's best troops, the Crown Regiment included. On June 22, every attempt to bridge the moat and crack the defensive barricades failed. After nine hours of heavy fighting, Emparan withdrew to Los Manzanillos, where his soldiers, José Joaquín de Herrera among them, "bivouacked, comfortless and dispirited."[31] With provisions and ammunition running low, Emparan ordered the remaining half of his troops to retreat to Toluca, while he cursed the viceroy who had forced his advance against his better judgment.

Encouraged by this and other insurgent successes, Rayón determined to extend his operations into the province of Mexico.

---

[30] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 311; Hernández y Dávalos, *Colección de documentos*, III, Doc. 38, p. 283.

[31] *Expediente de Herrera*, Tomo I, Doc. 236; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 330.

These inroads during the next few months brought him to the very gates of Toluca where a small loyalist force had been left to hold the city. During the early part of October, Toluca was besieged and bombarded for five days. Herrera was employed in one of the flanking defense forces of the city.[32] With the arrival of a relief detachment of five hundred men from the capital, the defenders were able to take the offensive. They drove the rebels from their positions, capturing much of their equipment. Of the one hundred Indians taken prisoner, all were shot except one who was allowed to bear tidings to his countrymen.[33]

As a mere cadet in the Crown Regiment, Herrera could not be expected to loom large in those early revolutionary battles. Not being an officer, he was not given commands or assignments of great importance. His military record was excellent nonetheless. It listed him as "sober, health—good, and conduct—good."[34] His army aptitude attracted the favorable notice of his superiors. After some twenty-six months as a cadet, José Joaquín de Herrera was promoted to the rank of *subteniente veterano* on January 2, 1812.[35]

The period of the revolution which followed is often referred to as the "epoch of Morelos." This rather short, thickset *mestizo* priest became the moving spirit of the insurgents shortly after the passing of Hidalgo and Allende from the scene. He was modest, taciturn, and the victim of constant headaches and malaria. He possessed rare military genius and was one of the most farsighted political thinkers in Mexican history.[36] He had been a pupil of Hidalgo at the College of San Nicolás and had served as an obscure priest in Carácuaro in Michoacán until the revolution began. José María Morelos had been commissioned by Hidalgo to raise troops. He began with only twenty-five followers, but by the end of 1811, he had raised an army of nine thousand men. These were well-trained and armed with equipment captured from the loyalists. Morelos also had gathered around him competent and loyal followers. Included among them were Matamoros, a priest; Vicente Guerrero, a peasant's son; the Galeano brothers, who were ranchers; and the Bravo family of Chilpancingo.[37] At the beginning of 1812, Morelos' troops controlled the whole country from Mexico to the Pacific coast, with the exception of the port of Acapulco.

---

[32] *Expediente de Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. 236; Bancroft, *op. cit.,* 337–338.

[33] Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico,* II, 392; Bancroft, *op. cit.,* 338.

[34] *Expediente de Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. 237.

[35] *Ibid.,* Doc. 524.

[36] Parkes, *op. cit.,* 157.

[37] *Ibid.*

The insurgents had adopted new methods of warfare which were most effective and very discouraging for the loyalists. Smaller, well-armed bands of mounted guerrillas swept down on towns and villages, silver trains, and haciendas only to disappear with the approach of Spanish troops. Many new guerrilla leaders developed, such as Félix Fernández, a law student from Durango; later he changed his name to Guadalupe Victoria and was to become the first president of Mexico. The tactics of these men drove the royalist leaders frantic, and stern repressive measures were adopted. Villages suspected of aiding the rebels were burned. Captives were more likely to be shot than imprisoned. Mexico was slowly but surely committing suicide.

In February, 1812, Calleja turned his attention to Morelos. Since Calleja was too strong to be met in open battle, Morelos resolved to occupy the town of Cuautla and wait. The city was situated on a small hill with roads of escape leading in all directions. Calleja tried to take the hill by storm, only to be repulsed. Failing in this, he decided to besiege the city and force its surrender by starvation. This was Calleja's first real defeat, and he wrote to the viceroy for more troops, adding

> Cuautla must be destroyed, and its defenders buried in its ruins, so that in the future no insurgent will find escape from death except by laying down his arms.[38]

The siege lasted for four months, with the defenders accepting every hardship cheerfully. Food and water were the chief concern. Conditions finally became so bad that

> A cat sold for six dollars, a lizard for two, and rats or other vermin for one. An ox which was seen one day feeding between the Spanish camp and the town nearly brought on a general engagement.[39]

Morelos hoped that with the coming of the rainy season, the siege would be lifted. That year, however, the rains were several weeks late in coming. After four months of constant siege and untold privations, Morelos planned to slip out of the city on the night of May 2, 1812. The noise of firing, which occurred when a group of loyalist sentries discovered the retreat, awakened the Spanish army. It was, however, too late to stay the withdrawal, and Morelos escaped with the majority of his forces.

---

[38] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 364, quoted from Bustamante, *Campañas de Calleja*, 170.

[39] H. G. Ward, *Mexico in 1827*, I, 196–197.

During the long siege, *Subteniente* Herrera commanded "three small groups of men in the streets on the western side of the city and took part in several minor skirmishes."[40]

Needless to say, Calleja was lampooned mercilessly in the capital for allowing Morelos to escape. Morelos quickly recovered and again occupied Cuautla and the whole surrounding area. During the rest of that year he was invincible, and Mexico City itself was in serious danger. In August, he captured Acapulco, the first port to fall to the insurgents. Only Mexico City, Puebla, and Vera Cruz remained to the royalists in southern Mexico.

Of even greater consequence than his military victories were Morelos' efforts to organize a legal government and draw up a liberal, popular constitution. Representatives were elected from areas under his control and met at Chilpancingo on September 14, 1813, to constitute a congress.[41] There the pretext of obedience to King Ferdinand was discarded. Mexico was to be a republic governed by a free people. Special privileges for clergy and army were to be abolished. Racial equality was to be invoked, and lands were to be given to the peasants at the expense of the great *hacendados*. Although Morelos was a devout Catholic, he advocated the seizure of church lands and the abolition of compulsory tithes. Morelos also favored universal suffrage, an executive branch of three persons, indirect elections, and a system of courts. These principles were included in the Constitution of Apatzingán which was signed October 22, 1814, and adopted by a Congress composed of eleven deputies.[42] By this time, however, the situation had changed, and the viceroy's troops had retaken most of the territory that Morelos controlled in 1813.

On the royalist ledger, 1812 and 1813 were unprofitable years. In Spain, the *cortes,* in which the Spanish colonies were now represented, promulgated the liberal Constitution of 1812. This was a very commendable document and served as a model for many other European countries who sought to curtail the powers of absolutism. It would have been a distinct asset to New Spain had there been no revolution in progress. This resulted in the peculiar situation of having the liberals in Spain supporting the conservative loyalists in New Spain against the liberal insurgents. The reason for this was, of course, that the liberals in Mexico and elsewhere in the Spanish colonies were much too liberal for their counterpart in Spain, who would not acquiesce in any project to disregard Ferdinand as king. Moreover, the viceroy in Mexico found it very embarrassing to declare the Constitution of 1812 effective because of the clause which guaranteed freedom of the press. It was hesitatingly proclaimed on October 5, 1812, with the anticipated result. The new liberty

---

[40] *Expediente de Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. 236.

[41] Morelos was present and stirringly addressed the Congress on September 14, 1813, as follows: ". . . vamos restablecer el imperio mexicano mejorando el gobierno: vamos en fin a ser libres e independientes. Temamos el juicio de una posteridad justa e inexorable que nos espera: temamos a la historia que ha de presentar al mundo el cuadro de nuestras acciones, y ajustemos nuestra conducta a los principios más sanos de honor, de religión y de política."—*Documentos de la guerra de independencia, Biblioteca Enciclopédica Popular,* Vol. 74, p. 56.

[42] Priestley, *op. cit.,* 234.

> was used as license, the press became an agency for promulgating revolutionary ideas and for insulting officials with an abandon of vituperation which could be no benefit to anyone.[43]

Instead of quelling dissatisfaction and revolt, the new Constitution made royalist success more difficult, due to the agitation created by a free press. At the same time the Regency and *cortes* in Spain insisted that the Mexican insurgents be defeated since sufficient concessions had been granted.

The aging Venegas was replaced as viceroy by his jealous enemy, General Calleja, in February, 1813. Calleja at once adopted a new technique in fighting the guerrilla tactics of the rebels. He armed the whole creole population, and all homeowners were organized into the militia for instant service against the enemy. This could have been disastrous for the royalists, but most people were growing very weary of the war. Forced loans, burned fields and villages, closed mines, and the virtual cessation of trade and commerce made all those with land and property eager for peace. Most of them reasoned that the quickest road to peace was by way of victory for the Spanish troops.

During the era of Morelos' leadership, *Subteniente* Herrera marched and counter-marched with the Crown Regiment over much of central and southwestern Mexico, engaging in numerous actions with the insurgent forces. He took part in the battle of Acatlán in February, 1813; was with Lieutenant Colonel Armijo in the forced crossing of the Mescala on January 21, 1814, being opposed by Guerrero's troops; and was present at Chichihualco on February 19, when the insurgents were dispersed by a few shots.[44] Herrera was with the loyalist troops who marched to recapture Acapulco which Morelos had taken the previous year.

---

[43] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 230.

[44] *Expediente de Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. 236; *Bancroft, op. cit.*, 575, 577.

The royalists under Armijo, now a colonel, appeared before Acapulco on April 12, only to find the city in flames and evacuated. Then followed several minor engagements for Herrera at the Cuesta del Bejuco, Pie de la Cuesta, and at the Rancho del Agua Zarca in the latter part of April.

The greatest accomplishment for Armijo in this western campaign occurred at El Veladero—a series of forts on the mountain summits near Acapulco held by Galeano with several hundred men. After two weeks of careful preparation, the main fortress was taken by a daring assault on May 6, 1814. In this battle, José Herrera won the *escudo de distinción* for bravery in action.[45] Most of the rebels escaped under cover of darkness. In November, Herrera fought at the Laguna de Zoquiapán, commanding the small body of men who surprised and defeated the rebel, Brigadier Sánches, killing the guerrilla leader and half of his troops and capturing all of his arms and ammunition. Shortly thereafter, Herrera was promoted to the rank of *Capitán de Milicias*.[46]

As a lieutenant, Herrera had been in charge of a company of pickets in the *Infantería de la Corona* and had shared all their hardships in the field.[47] Upon his promotion to a captaincy, he left the Crown Regiment and was assigned to the second company of *Milicias de Chilapa* in which he served from November 27, 1814, to January 31, 1816. In this new assignment, he saw action at Cerro de Hostotitlán in December, 1814; in the expedition against Axuchitlán; and at San Cristóbal and Cayuca in April, 1815. Much of this time was spent chasing guerrila bands which would strike and then disappear into the hills. One such band under the command of Victor Maciel was drawn into battle at Tlacotepec in July, 1815. Herrera's company dispersed the rebels, inflicting many casualties.[48]

Meanwhile, Morelos' lustre had been dimmed by several defeats. One of the most disastrous of these was at the hands of a young *mestizo* colonel, Agustín Iturbide. Iturbide was being besieged by Morelos in Valladolid in December, 1813. One night Iturbide gathered a body of cavalry, broke through the rebel lines and captured the main fortifications. In the confusion and darkness the insurgents fought each other. Morelos was able to retreat to Puruarán, but there again he met defeat. Gradually all the territory he had held fell into royalist hands. Hildegardo Galeano and Matamoros, two of Morelos' ablest lieutenants, were captured and shot. The Congress which Morelos had created now deposed him from leadership. This he gracefully accepted. In two months Iturbide "had captured and shot nineteen chieftains and nine hundred of their followers."[49] Meanwhile, the Congress itself was being closely pursued, and Morelos was appointed to escort it to a new seat of government at Tehuacán. At Texmalaca, his forces were intercepted by a Spanish army. Morelos ordered Nicolás Bravo to guide the representatives to safety while he and a few followers diverted the loyalists. Morelos was captured by one of his former officers on November 5, 1815, and taken to Mexico City. There he was imprisoned. He refused his jailer's offer of escape, saying that he could not save his own life at the peril of another. The government feared that the execution of such an outstanding rebel as Morelos in the capital might cause riot and disorder. He was, therefore, taken to a nearby village, San Cristóbal Ecatépec, where he faced a firing squad on December 22, 1815.[50]

---

[45] *Expediente de Herrera*, Tomo I, Doc. 236; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, 579.

[46] *Expediente de Herrera*, Tomo I, Doc. 236, 524.

[47] *Ibid.*, Doc. 236. Herrera was subsisting "con su companía en los mismos terminos."

[48] *Expediente de Herrera*, Tomo I, Doc. 236, 524.

The capture and execution of Morelos did not have the powerful effect that was envisaged. This was due largely to the fact that he had lost his position of preëminence before his death. However, it was only a matter of time until the revolutionary movement was at a standstill. In 1816, the insurgents numbered only some nine thousand men in scattered bands under leaders who were jealous of each other. Mier y Terán at Tehuacán, Vicente Guerrero in Mizteca, Guadalupe Victoria in Vera Cruz, Osorno near Querétaro, and Torres, in the Bahío region of Guanajuato, were the outstanding leaders left to guide the revolution. Their troops were poorly armed, had practically no artillery, and possessed little money with which to wage war. The congress, which Morelos had saved, tried to direct military operations for a time, but its efforts became so futile that it was arbitrarily dissolved by the young Mier y Terán, who took over the authority for himself.[51] Rosains had deserted the insurgent cause, and, after escaping from confinement imposed by Mier y Terán, he joined the Spanish army. With the loss of territory and sources of revenue, the revolutionary movement came more and more to be identified with rapine and personal ambition.

---

[49] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 163.

[50] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 237–238; Niceto de Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, X, 56.

[51] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 241. Mier y Terán, although only twenty years old at the time, was an experienced and capable military leader.

> The rebel chiefs, scarcely distinguishable from bandits, built themselves impregnable strongholds in the high mountains, tyrannized over their adherents, and used for their own adornment the gold and silver, the jewels and expensive fabrics, which they stole from the *gachupines*.[52]

On the other hand, the royalists could count on thirty thousand men of whom half were of the regular army. In addition to these formally organized troops, there were many groups of militia which could be used by the government for emergencies and local defense purposes. All in all the loyalists could muster some eighty thousand soldiers to oppose the nine thousand of the rebel leaders. It should have been a relatively easy matter to suppress the isolated revolutionary bands with an overwhelming force, which was exactly the plan followed by Viceroy Calleja. His successful but harsh policy soon broke the back of the revolution. He was, however, considered too cruel and was too cordially disliked to be entrusted with the task of final pacification. Of even greater consequence in his removal was the fact that the restored and reactionary King Ferdinand remembered that Calleja had been appointed by the Spanish Revolutionary Regency. The result was that the king substituted a viceroy of his own choosing in the person of Juan Ruíz de Apodaca, who arrived in Mexico in August, 1816. Apodaca proved to be a fortunate choice, with no special credit to Ferdinand, who did not actually realize what the situation demanded. The new viceroy offered pardons to all who would accept clemency. This won over many of the opposition in the light of the hopelessness of the situation. He also pressed the attack against Mier y Terán in Tehuacán. The rebels offered surprisingly little resistance and Tehuacán was easily taken in January, 1817. After this capitulation, which may have been a bit precipitous, Mier y Terán gave up the fight for independence and retired to private life.[53] Puebla was brought back into the loyalist fold with the submission of Osorno in that area. Vera Cruz and Oaxaca were soon suppressed and by early 1817, rebel activity of any significance remained only in Michoacán and Guanajuato.

During 1817, there was one brief spark of hope when the Spanish liberal, Francisco Javier Mina, landed in Tamaulipas to aid the revolutionary cause. This young man had been among the Navarrese who had revolted against Ferdinand when he had regained his throne in 1814. The failure of this revolt had forced Mina to flee to England and then to the United States. Along the way he had collected other liberal and reckless adventurers like himself and planned to aid in the completion of independence of New Spain from the mother country. His arrival in Mexico was poorly timed, and he gained little support. To make matters worse, a company of his followers from the United States, under Colonel Perry, deserted him. After several minor victories near San Juan de los Lagos, he was defeated by the loyalists and then was beset by dissension in his own ranks. He was eventually surprised and captured by the loyalists at El Venadito on October 27, 1817, and was shot the following month. Soon thereafter, the old stronghold, or fort, of Los Remedios in Guanajuato fell to the loyalists, and its last defenders were killed. This occurred on January 1, 1818. The fortunes of the revolution were at their lowest ebb; only Vicente Guerrero and Guadalupe Victoria held out.[54]

---

[52] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 164.

[53] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 242.

During this period of continued loyalist success, following the death of Morelos, Captain Herrera was occupied in the task of pacification and the mopping up of the remaining small bands of insurgents. In the late summer of 1815, he was given the command of a division of four hundred men which he skillfully led in defeating the rebel leader, Colonel Montes de Oca y Aguero, at Tlacotepec.[55] On February 1, 1816, Captain Herrera was detached from the *Milicias de Chilapa* and was assigned to duty with the *Batallón del Sur* in which he remained until his retirement from the loyalist army in 1820.[56] At San Pedro on June 20, 1816, he led the forces that defeated and prevented the reorganization of various rebel groups under the *caudillo,* Julián de Ávila. Practically all of the insurgent artillery, munitions, and armament were taken by Herrera's troops. From this point on, Herrera was to hold several military-political posts. For over a year he was in political and military command of the district of Tecpán where he used part of his forces to sweep the area under his jurisdiction completely clear of rebel activity.[57]

After approximately eight years of army service on active and hazardous duty, Herrera was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel in June, 1817, following an action at Petatlán on April 25, in which he had particularly distinguished himself.[58]

---

[54] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 244. Guadalupe Victoria, whose real name was Félix Fernández, wandered in the hills for thirty months with little to eat and clothed only in a pair of cotton trousers. He and Vicente Guerrero were destined to become the first and second presidents of the Mexican Republic.

[55] *Expediente de Herrera*, Tomo I, Doc. 236.

[56] *Ibid.*, Doc. 524. He was a member of the Battalion of the South until August 4, 1820.

[57] *Expediente de Herrera*, Tomo I, Doc. 236; Manuel Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de Mexico*, II, 271.

Another signal honor for the young officer was his appointment as military and political commander of Acapulco, which position he took over upon giving up his post in Tecpán. He served in this dual capacity in the Acapulco region until November, 1817. In January, 1818, he was made a Captain of Grenadiers and was given a field assignment to go to the relief of the royalist forces besieging Jaujilla. From May 3 to May 6, Herrera's forces battled the revolutionists opposing his crossing of the Zacatula River. During the latter part of 1818, Herrera commanded the difficult retreat from Tupátaro; then he rapidly countermarched to the relief of the loyalists at Axuchitlán on November 2, of the same year. His troops also had a part in the decisive defeat of the rebels at Real de Farco the 31st of December.[59]

At the same time that Herrera was engaged in these more or less final skirmishes with the few remaining guerrilla bands, he also served for several months as *comandante principal* of the Tierra-Caliente region until September, 1819.[60] He took part in the expedition of Goleta and was present at the capture of the fort of San Gaspar in October, 1819. At this point, as has been stated, the only noteworthy opposition to the loyalist cause was led by Vicente Guerrero, who commanded a few troops, and Guadalupe Victoria, who was wandering aimlessly and half-starved through the forests. The suppression of rebel activity had been so complete that Apodaca reported to his king that he would need no further reënforcements and that he could control the situation with the troops now under his command.[61]

In spite of these successes, many of the creole officers of the king's army were wondering whether their efforts of the past decade in behalf of Ferdinand had been worth the price. True, their king had returned to the Spanish throne, as they had hoped, but he had been anything but the benevolent and liberal ruler that many had expected. The Constitution of 1812 had given a taste of the political and social good things that creoles had wanted but that only *gachupines* had possessed. That constitution had been promulgated twice, only to be repealed on both occasions.

---

[58] *Expediente de Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. 524. He received the "grado de Teniente Coronel por el mérito contraido en la acción dada en Petatlán el 25 de abril del mismo año. . . ." The promotion was given June 13, 1817.

[59] *Ibid.,* Doc. 236; Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.,* II, 271.

[60] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.,* II, 271.

[61] Priestley, *op. cit.,* 244.

Ferdinand had proved as reactionary and unappreciative as any Bourbon could be. He had shown no interest in the political and social problems of the creoles, *mestizos*, or Indians. The old Spanish colonial policy of exploitation had not been changed, and the antiquated administrative system still existed. It was no wonder that many creoles and *mestizos* who had fought in the royalist forces for ten long, bitter years began to reason that the most desirable road for Mexico to follow from a national and personal viewpoint was that of complete separation from Spain. Among those who were thinking along these lines were Agustín Iturbide, Antonio López de Santa Anna, and José Joaquín de Herrera.

Herrera undoubtedly gave the confusing and conflicting developments of 1819 and 1820 serious thought. He was older now, and he was better able to evaluate the liberal idealism, the independence movement, and the political and social problems which confronted Mexico than had been the case in 1810. Possibly the tenacious attachment to the cause of independence of some of the revolutionists whom he had helped to suppress had made an indelible impression upon him. Perhaps he was disillusioned with the shoddy performance of King Ferdinand. He certainly talked with many of his brother creole officers who had come to the conclusion that separation from Spain was the most advantageous course for Mexico and for the creoles, who still insisted that the *gachupines* be removed from their position of dominance of Mexican political and social life. Added to this came the startling news that Colonel Riego's troops, who were about to be embarked from Spain to fight against the rebels in Buenos Aires, had revolted against the king in January of 1820. All of these things Herrera pondered and turned confusedly over in his mind. While again in command of the troops of Acapulco, he reached the decision to request his retirement from the royalist army. His request was granted, and he withdrew from the king's service August 5, 1820, with the rank of lieutenant colonel *graduado*. Herrera now returned to his old home in Perote where he opened, of all things, a *botica*, or apothecary shop.

Herrera had served his king well during these past eleven years. He had been a good soldier in the ranks—obedient, resourceful, and eager to learn. He was twice decorated for bravery in battle. As an officer, he had shared the hardships of his men, and through quiet firmness and a reputation for impartiality had maintained

---

[62] *Expediente de Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. 524.

a high state of efficiency and discipline. This was in contrast with the usual harsh methods and favoritism currently practiced. His military record was excellent with nothing to mar his period of service. In none of his posts could he be charged with fraud or graft, insubordination or self-aggrandizement. This in itself was a rather difficult record to maintain, as some of his contemporaries might attest.[63] When the situation had changed and conditions had reached a point where he no longer felt he could honestly support the royalist cause, Herrera did the only honorable thing to do: he requested retirement and a complete withdrawal from active service. Now in Perote, among his drugs and pills, he was free to consider separatist ideas and proposals.

---

[63] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 169. Iturbide had been discharged from service because of graft while Santa Anna was also known to have had his bad moments.

CHAPTER III

Herrera and Iturbide: Independence and the First Empire, 1820–1823

The revolutionary movement in Mexico entered its final phase in 1820, but only after undergoing a complete change of character. A revolt in Spain of Colonel Riego's troops in January of that year and their refusal to wage war against the insurgents of Argentina had varying repercussions. The immediate result was to force King Ferdinand VII to relinquish temporarily his reactionary policy and restore the liberal Constitution of 1812. He declared that Spain would now tread the paths of constitutionality, "I, myself, leading the way." This he felt obliged to do or lose his kingdom entirely. The sudden change to liberalism on the part of Spain was viewed with mixed feelings in Mexico. The conservative *gachupines* and the clergy were particularly distressed at the turn of events. Those two groups stood to lose heavily if class and religious privileges, or *fueros*, were abolished under the new liberal program. Although the creoles and *mestizos* profited by the restoration of the Constitution of 1812, they realized that Mexico was still bound hand and foot, economically and administratively, to Spain, and that Mexico would not be given adequate representation in the Spanish *cortes*. An independent Mexico would give them even greater possibilities for advancement. Of course, the original separatist group which had been fighting for independence for ten years did not consider that the promulgation of the liberal constitution for the third time in New Spain was anything more than an effort on the part of the Spanish king to divert their attention from their main purpose.

The clergy, in particular, in Mexico were disturbed by these liberal developments. Certainly the higher clergy, almost to a man, had opposed the radical revolution from the outset, since its success would have meant their undoing.[1] Now it seemed that in spite of their best efforts in Mexico, liberalism, triumphant in Spain, would destroy their conservative plans for New Spain. The Spanish *cortes* had already shown its hostility to the Church by its progressive abolition of the fanatical Inquisition. It had even dared to seize the tithes of the secular clergy in order to carry on the liberalized government program. This threat to clerical power and privilege could best be thwarted by isolating Mexico, insofar as possible, from the dread disease of liberalism, and it now appeared that this could be done only by supporting the cause of complete separation from Spain. To emphasize that conclusion, there followed renewed suppression of the Jesuits, the denial of special privileges pertaining to the holy orders, and the seizure of certain church properties. This paradoxical situation developed many cross purposes. Nevertheless, the clergy, although they now supported a cause which they had fought against for a decade, had been thoroughly consistent in their position. They had fought liberalism in Mexico, as represented by Hidalgo and Morelos, and now it was liberalism in Spain. Independence for Mexico, controlled and led by the conservative elements of society, seemed to be the solution to the problem. All that was needed was for some leader to appear who could weld together these various groups which had come to support the idea of independence for different, but convergent, reasons. Such a man was Agustín de Iturbide. Although he was a *mestizo*, he had been more or less accepted as a creole. As has been seen, Iturbide had fought in the royalist ranks and had been instrumental in the fall of Morelos. However, in 1816, he was forced to join the ranks of the unemployed. It had been his duty to provide convoys for the silver trains passing through the rebel territory. He had utilized this situation to his own advantage, "charging a percentage for himself; mine owners who refused to bribe him could provide for their own defence."[2] Viceroy Apodaca learned of his peculation and retired Iturbide to private life.

---

[1] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 245.

Iturbide then turned to the Church in order to restore his lost reputation. He indicated a great desire for purification and went into retreat at the convent of La Profesa. The convent became the meeting place of many high clerics, conservatives, and government officials, who came to discuss the political situation in Spain and its effect on Mexico. The leader of this group was Matías Monteagudo, chief of the abolished Inquisition in New Spain. These men soon decided to aid the program of independence, and, with the resources of the Church at their disposal and the backing of a large portion of the leading families of the capital, they carefully laid their plans for revolution. They found a ready-made military leader to put their plans into operation in the handsome and able, religious and anti-liberal Iturbide; he was delighted with the opportunity that their proposal offered.

---

[2] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 169.

Guerrero was still active in the southeast. Even his own father, who had been sent by the viceroy to offer him money and position to join the loyalist cause, had been unable to persuade him to desert his principles.[3] Apodaca was, therefore, preparing to send an expedition against Guerrero in a final crushing blow. Here was the hoped-for opportunity. The clergy induced Apodaca to appoint Iturbide as a military commander of the expedition. The clergy probably had in mind the defeat of Guerrero and the substitution of Iturbide for Apodaca as viceroy. Iturbide, however, had other plans.

> But Iturbide had ideas of his own. He was planning to be the Liberator of Mexico—even perhaps its Bonaparte—a project which had dazzled the friends to whom he had revealed it, and which had seemed to one of them, during a midnight walk with Iturbide through the moonlit streets of the capital, to be almost supernatural.[4]

In December, 1820, Iturbide, at the head of two thousand five hundred well-armed men, made contact with the forces of Guerrero. His purpose, however, was not to fight seriously against Guerrero. He hoped, instead, to win him over to a plan of independence from Spain—a plan which Iturbide, himself, had prepared. Numerous conferences and two months' time were required to convince Guerrero that Iturbide was not playing a trick and that he actually favored separation. In February, the two leaders met at Iguala and from their discussions evolved the *Plan de Iguala,* which was proclaimed to the Mexican people on February 24, 1821. This plan provided a solid and agreeable basis on which almost all classes desirous of independence could unite. Roman Catholicism was to be the only tolerated religion. New Spain was to be independent under a moderate, constitutional monarchy. Ferdinand VII was to be offered the throne, and in case he refused, it was to be tendered to some other member of the Spanish royal family who would be designated by the new

---

[3] The following is an excerpt from the poem, "Vicente Guerrero," by José Peón y Contreras from the collection, *Romances de la guerra de independencia, Biblioteca Enciclopédica Popular,* Tomo 71, p. 47:

Valiente, aguerrido, fiero
Sin municiones, sin armas
Con su voluntad inmensa
Mas grande que su esperanza
Un hombre aparece entonces
En el confín de la Patria;
Como al náufraga aparece
El faro tras la borrasca,
Como en medio de los campos
Al caminante que anda
Perdido en lóbrega noche,
La aurora serena y clara.
Era Vicente Guerrero
Que en boscosas sierras altas
Defiende de un pueblo el solo
Las libertades sagradas. . . .

[4] Parkes, *op. cit.,* 170.

Mexican legislative body. A junta, or council, appointed by Iturbide was to provide for the election of the *cortes* and was to govern the country until that body could be constituted and a ruler should arrive.[5]

The main provisions were known as the Three Guarantees, and the troops that supported the program were called the Army of the Three Guarantees. These guarantees were: (1) the upholding of the Catholic religion and clerical privileges; (2) absolute independence; and (3) racial equality. This last guarantee was recognized in a clause which stated that all inhabitants could hold public office. Iturbide placed this plan before Apodaca and offered him the presidency of the junta. The viceroy refused and declared Iturbide a traitor. The conservative element at first favored the old constitutional government and was lukewarm to Iturbide's plan. Apodaca, however, moved slowly, and, as news of the plan spread throughout Mexico, many enthusiastically joined the movement, including a number of royalist officers. When Anastasio Bustamante's forces joined with Guerrero and Iturbide, the Trigarantine troops totalled six thousand. Village after village, town after town, adhered to the "safe and sane" program which promised independence, equal political opportunity, and the security of life, property, and religion.

In Perote, the pharmacist, José Joaquín de Herrera, observed these events and quietly awaited the turn of the wheel of fortune to see what was in store for Mexico. He knew Iturbide personally and was in sympathy with the newly-proposed *Plan de Iguala*. It is highly probable that, since his retirement from the royalist army in August of the preceding year, he had been in correspondence with the civil and clerical leaders of this recent phase of the separatist movement. As yet he had not committed himself definitely to the cause of independence; indeed, he was enjoying his peaceful life as a civilian in his new occupation.

Within a week after the proclamation of the *Plan de Iguala*, a general restlessness was everywhere apparent. In Vera Cruz the tailors began to work night and day making uniforms for the national militia.[6] The royalist colonel, Orbegozo, had his hands full in Jalapa trying to control the enthusiasm of the townspeople for independence. On March 13, a regiment of the *Columna de Granaderos* marched out of Jalapa for an unknown destination. On the road, the young officers informed their men that they had adhered to the *Plan de Iguala* and that the column was now on its way to Perote to win over that city to the revolutionists. Practically all of the men responded with "vivas for Iturbide and independence." Some few asked to be allowed to return to Jalapa.[7] Proceeding to Perote, the grenadiers were joined by a party of Spanish dragoons and a number of patriots from the city and surrounding area. There was some dispute as to who the senior officer would be since there was no officer above the rank of captain and several of them held that rank. The officers were on the verge of dividing the command into smaller, separate groups when it was decided to offer the entire command to Lieutenant Colonel José Joaquín de Herrera, whose military experience was well known. Approached in his drug store, Herrera at first refused the request of the delegation that had come to see him. After insistent urging, he agreed to accept on the condition that "in everything the greatest order and discipline must be observed."[8]

---

[5] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 248.

[6] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 146–147.

Herrera first endeavored to convince Viña, the royalist commandant of the fortress in Perote, to join with him. Viña refused to be persuaded, and Herrera proceeded to Tepeyahualco and San Juan de los Llanos, where additional forces joined his banner.[9] With this success and that of Nicolás Bravo in Huamantla, the plan of independence gained new converts daily. On March 18, Colonel Herrera's forces adopted the name of Imperial Grenadiers. The "*dragones de España*" took the title of "*dragones de America.*" The priest at Actopán, Martínez, proclaimed independence there and then spread the seeds of separatist propaganda in the cities of Orizaba and Córdoba.[10] This so alarmed Dávila, the governor of Vera Cruz, that he sent Captain José Antonio López de Santa Anna to put down the unrest in Orizaba. After a week of indifferent fighting, Santa Anna managed to gain control of the city. For this success, Santa Anna was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the royalist army; but, on the same day, March 29, Herrera appeared before Orizaba with a superior force and pointed out to him that discretion was the better part of valor. Santa Anna, promptly, as was his custom, saw the most advantageous course to take. He not only joined the separatists but also received the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Trigarantine Army.[11]

---

[7] *Ibid.* "aunque algunos pocos soldados regresaron al saber en el camino el objeto de su marcha y pidieron indulto en Jalapa, los demás proclamaron la independencia . . ." Ignacio Álvarez, *Estudios sobre la historia general de México*, IV, 364.

[8] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 271; Ortega, *op. cit.*, II, 31.

[9] Álvarez, *op. cit.*, IV, 364. When Viña did not adhere to the plan, a majority of his troops deserted to Herrera.

[10] Álvarez, *op. cit.*, IV, 364; Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 148.

Herrera's division was joyously received in Orizaba while Santa Anna proceeded to capture the port of Alvarado. Córdoba also joined the independents, and Herrera was again welcomed with enthusiasm. Returning to Orizaba, Herrera requested twenty-five thousand pesos from the city for military expenses but was able to raise only seventeen thousand.[12] News came at this point that the viceroy had ordered Colonel Francisco Hevia to attack Nicolás Bravo at Izúcar. Having discovered the plan, Herrera resolved to march to Bravo's aid. Upon reaching Izúcar, he found it abandoned, for Bravo had retreated to Tepeaca. Hevia had counted on defeating Herrera and Bravo separately, but even now their combined forces of five hundred men represented only half the number at Hevia's disposal. The battle for the town, on April 23–24, resulted in a draw; the royalists failed to take the fortified convent of San Francisco, and the rebels were unable to take the offensive. Herrera and Bravo retreated to San Andrés Chalchicomula to cut royalist communications with Puebla and to make further plans.

José Herrera showed undeniable military skill and a knowledge of military science and tactics in these campaigns.[13] He realized the financial and administrative importance to the viceroy of Orizaba and Córdoba, by reason of their being centers for the collection of the tobacco taxes as well as points of administrative control. His decision to try to hold Córdoba at all cost proved to be a difficult one to maintain after Hevia arrived before the city from Orizaba, reënforced by the recent addition of Colonel Saturnino Samaniego's troops. Hevia had entered Orizaba on May 12, and, upon hearing that Herrera was fortifying Córdoba as rapidly as possible, he planned an immediate attack on that city.[14] Herrera's troops were worn out from days of forced marching and lack of sufficient food; but he ordered them, nevertheless, to prepare fortifications and strengthen existing defenses around the plaza and outskirts of the town.[15] Hevia began his siege of Córdoba on May 15, and, according to Santa Anna, had "three thousand expeditionaries" with which he had surrounded Herrera and his "handful of enthusiastic patriots who were resolved to sell their lives dearly."[16] When news reached Santa Anna in Alvarado that Herrera's garrison was hard pressed, he hastened to Córdoba to relieve the independents. In his usual immodest style, he described his part in the battle:

---

[11] Santa Anna misrepresented his conversion to the cause of independence somewhat in his "Memoirs": "When the *Plan de Iguala*, proclaimed by Colonel Don Agustín Iturbide, February 24, 1821, appeared, I hastened to espouse it, wishing to contribute my little bit to the great work of our political regeneration." It will be noted that he failed to mention the persuasive argument of Herrera's division. W. W. Watkins, *Memoirs of General Santa Anna*, 33.

[12] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 150.

[13] Luis Gonzaga Cuevas, *Porvenir de México, 1821–1828*, p. 66. "Herrera . . . se condujo siempre con todo el valor y prudencia de un jefe esperimentado. . . ."

[14] Cuevas, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

> Very opportune was my arrival in Córdoba; only one wall remained for the defense of the patriots. The conflict was severe and the exigencies in proportion. It was necessary to take the offensive quickly and actively, and I took it at all risk with two thousand men and six cannon. Fortune favored my efforts; in the first encounter, the famous Spanish colonel, Hevia, who commanded the expeditionaries, was out of the combat. This success upset the operations of the enemy to the extent of suspending their hostilities and setting them in march to Puebla, leaving many deserters who sought my tricolored banner.[17]

Actually, it appears that Hevia was shot through the head by Herrera's men the day before Santa Anna arrived. His death was due largely to his own recklessness; annoyed at his failure to dislodge the defenders, he had exposed himself rashly. Hevia was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Castillo y Luna, who continued the siege. Within a few days, however, Herrera's forces had so increased, due to royalist desertions and to accretion from the surrounding area, that he proposed to Castillo y Luna that he capitulate to him. The royalist officer decided to retreat to Orizaba posthaste under cover of darkness. This plan he put into effect the night of May 21, but Herrera sent his cavalry of three hundred men in pursuit under the command of Santa Anna.[18] This defeat so weakened the royalists that they soon gave up Orizaba for the last time and retreated to Puebla. Iturbide, the *primer jefe* of the army, thereupon ordered Bravo and Herrera to besiege Puebla, which was accomplished by the middle of June.[19] Within a month the city was captured; and in August, Iturbide himself entered Puebla.

---

[15] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 154.

[16] Watkins, *Memoirs of General Santa Anna*, 34.

[17] *Ibid.*, 35–36.

[18] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 153–155; Cuevas, *op. cit.*, 69. The loss of Hevia was a real one to the viceroy who had depended heavily on him to hold the Province of Vera Cruz.

[19] Cuevas, *op. cit.*, 83. At this time, Herrera wrote to Iturbide requesting that Santa Anna not be allowed to create a new battalion at the expense of

After a very slow start, the revolution gained rapid headway during the summer months. Both liberals and former royalists began to join Iturbide, and by July, "the movement had become a stampede."[20] In May, Iturbide occupied the city of Valladolid and the following month, Guadalajara adhered to the *Plan de Iguala*. The whole of northern Mexico soon followed their example. Meanwhile, Guerrero had had unbelievable success in the South; and, under his leadership, old rebel guerrillas, who had at one time accepted pardons from Apodaca, returned to fight for independence. When friends went into the mountains and brought back Guadalupe Victoria, many thought they were seeing a ghost, as it was the common belief that the liberal leader had long since been dead. It was true that the plan of Iguala had little similarity to that of Morelos, since Iturbide's program guaranteed existing property rights. In fact, it rather closely resembled the original scheme of the conspirators of Querétaro in 1810 before Hidalgo's premature announcement to the Indians had resulted in a hideous mutation. Regardless of comparative differences in these programs for independence, previous supporters of the old plan, as well as royalists, clergy, creoles, and *mestizos*, united quickly under the tricolor which represented the Three Guarantees. By the time that a new viceroy arrived in July, 1821, to replace Apodaca, independence was all but won.

Apodaca had found himself unable to stem the tide of revolution, and the Masonic group of the capital, who claimed he was partially in sympathy with Iturbide, forced his resignation. For less than a month General Novella reluctantly assumed the viceregal powers.[21] Then, on the 30th of July, Juan O'Donojú, the last of the viceroys, arrived at Vera Cruz from Spain. It was thought that his appointment was the work of Ramos Arizpe, the liberal representative from Coahuila in the Spanish *cortes*. Some believed that he had really come to aid the independence movement, but under the direction of the *cortes*. Santa Anna, as commander of the port of Vera Cruz, would not allow him to advance into the interior. Some of O'Donojú's family became ill in the pestilential atmosphere of the coast, and there was nothing for

---

his division. Many of the officers and men that Santa Anna wanted to have placed under his command had for some time been members of Herrera's forces. This was not the last time that Herrera would have to draw rein on the ambitious Santa Anna. Letter of José Joaquín Herrera to Iturbide, June 14, 1821, from the *Expediente de Herrera*, I, 42.

[20] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 171.

[21] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 249. He took office on July 6, 1821.

him to do but to enter into negotiations with Iturbide, the commander-in-chief, in order to obtain permission to proceed to the healthier climate of Córdoba.

This request was granted with the understanding that O'Donojú would support the principles of the *Plan de Iguala.* This he formally agreed to do in the Treaty of Córdoba, signed August 24, 1821. The provisions of the treaty reiterated the statements of the Iguala document with at least one very important change. If none of the Spanish royal family would accept the throne as previously provided, the crown might be offered to "such person as the Imperial Cortes may designate."[22] The kingship was no longer limited to royalty, and the way was clear for the realization of Iturbide's fondest desire—to hold the title of Emperor of Mexico.

After the successful siege of Puebla, which ended in July, 1821, practically the whole of Mexico was in Iturbide's hands. Things had been happening so fast that there had been little time to think of promotions. Herrera still held his rank as a retired lieutenant colonel, but on August 10 he was made lieutenant colonel *efectivo* and on the same day was promoted to full colonel by Iturbide.[23] He was in command of the ninth division of Imperial Grenadiers of the Army of the Three Guarantees and was to remain in active command of that body until March 16, 1822. This well deserved promotion was a recognition of his capable and valiant service at Orizaba, Córdoba, and Puebla. Herrera had been largely instrumental in freeing central and eastern Mexico from royalist control. In addition, he possessed the admiration and respect of his men who knew that he was always willing to share their privations and hardships. Colonel Herrera on many occasions wrote to senior officers requesting better housing facilities for his men, more adequate food supplies, and better medical attention.[24] In many ways he was an ideal officer, never guilty of insubordination and never seeking to curry favor. Herrera carried out his assignments with military skill and dispatch.

---

[22] "Tratados Celebrados en la Villa de Córdoba el 24 de agosto, 1821," quoted in *Documentos de la guerra de independencia, Biblioteca Enciclopédica Popular,* Vol. 74, p. 83. "3. Será llamado a reinar en el imperio mexicano (previo el juramento que designa el artículo 4 del plan) en primer lugar, el Sr. D. Fernando VII, rey católico de España, y por su renuncia o no admisión, su hermano . . . o no admisión de éste, el que las cortes del imperio designaren."

[23] *Expediente de Herrera,* Tomo I, Doc. 524.

[24] Letter of General Filisola to Iturbide, September 20, 1821, quoted in Vito Alessio Robles, *La correspondencia de Agustín de Iturbide después de la proclamación del Plan de Iguala,* I, 205.

Iturbide now allowed O'Donojú to go on to Mexico City and to take over the government. Among other provisions of the Treaty of Córdoba were: that there should be freedom of the press; that all Spanish troops should immediately evacuate the country; and that the Trigarantine Army would promptly march into the capital. O'Donojú began to initiate these measures as soon as he arrived in Mexico City. On the same day that the royalist army marched out, Colonel Herrera led the ninth division into the capital.[25] His forces were the advance guard sent to prepare the way for the grand entrance of the *primer jefe*, Iturbide, who entered the capital on September 27, with all the feudal splendor of an armored knight.[26] Riding on a black horse, he paraded through the streets to the Alameda, to the joyous acclaim of the people as "El Libertador." The *ayuntamiento* presented him with golden keys to the city, placed on a silver tray. After O'Donojú had received him officially at the palace, the archbishop presided over thanksgiving ceremonies in the cathedral. Iturbide was one step nearer his goal.

Iturbide now set the wheels in motion for organizing a government. He formed a Regency with O'Donojú as a member and himself as president. He fancied himself as an aristocrat, and, as might be expected, the more radical leaders of the independence movement were largely excluded from positions of importance. When O'Donojú conveniently died on October 8, Iturbide's chances for the throne were improved. This vacancy in the Regency was

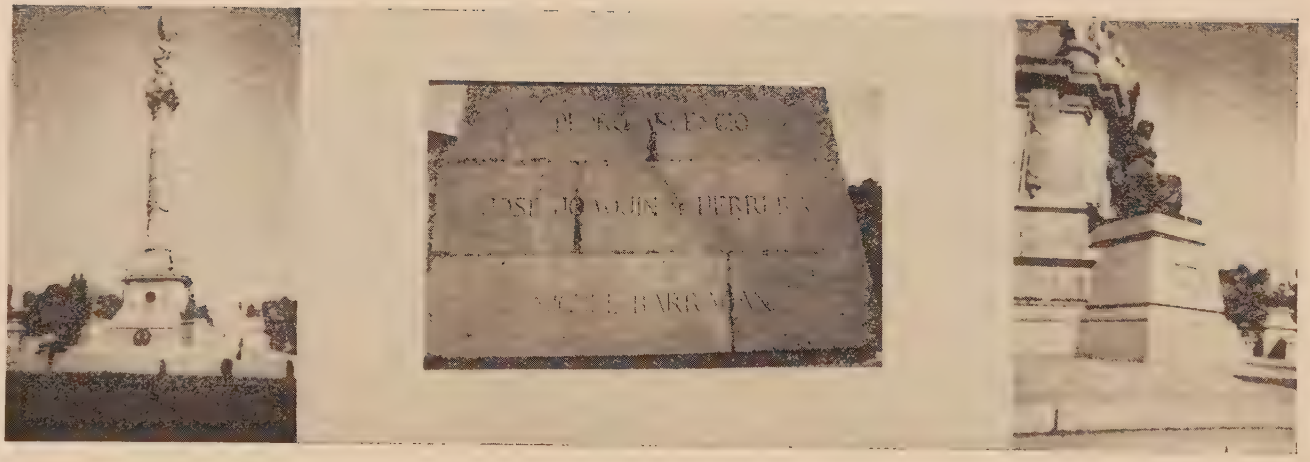
---

General Filisola says that he has received a letter from Colonel Herrera complaining about the poor quarters assigned to his division. Filisola reports to Iturbide that although they are not entirely satisfactory to Colonel Herrera, they are the best available.

[25] "The royalist troops marched out of the capital simply by virtue of O'Donojú's orders. There was no formal capitulation. They were to be quartered in Tezcuco and Tocuca until opportunity offered for their embarkation. The plan was carried into effect on the morning of September 23, and the same day the grenadiers, under Colonel José Joaquín de Herrera, occupied the fortress and palace of Chapultepec." Bancroft, *op. cit.*, IV, 731.

"The neighboring forest was thronged with people from the city without interference from the independents." Carlos María de Bustamante, *Cuadro histórica de la revolución mexicana*, V, 324.

[26] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 172. For the important rôle which Herrera played in winning independence his name appears on the National Independence Monument in Mexico City. There are four smaller monuments at the base of the main shaft. Herrera's name is fittingly placed on the monument to "Peace." (See next page.)



The National Independence Monument in Mexico City

This beautiful monument to independence is located on the Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico City. Four smaller monuments to War, Peace, Law and Justice surround the main shaft which is surmounted by the golden "*angel de independencia.*" The name of José Joaquín de Herrera very appropriately appears on the monument to Peace which is shown above.

filled by appointing the bishop of Puebla. Iturbide allocated for his own salary the modest sum of 125,000 pesos a year and appropriated the titles of Generalissimo and High Admiral. He should have remembered that economy was essential, since the treasury was bankrupt and some eighty thousand men were now on the government payroll. He then directed the Regents to appoint a Committee of Notables who, in turn, should provide for the election of a Constitutional Congress.

The Committee of Notables, upon being constituted, proved not to be so docile and pliable as Iturbide had planned, and it soon developed an opposition to the Plan, the treaty, and Iturbide's arbitrary methods. Iturbide had only one idea, an empire under Agustín I, but some of the members of the Committee began to talk of a "republic." A few of them even planned to seize Iturbide and establish a representative government.[26a] This group, led by Guadalupe Victoria and Nicolás Bravo, met at the historic home of Miguel Domínguez, where similar meetings had been held in Hidalgo's time. Iturbide discovered their plans and imprisoned some of the conspirators for a short period.

Meanwhile, Herrera was becoming better known as he continued to hold positions of increasing importance. On October 12, 1821, he was promoted by Iturbide to the rank of brigadier.[27] Increase in rank did not have the effect of causing Herrera to lose interest in the welfare of his men or to spend his time in agitating for some special political preferment as Santa Anna and others were doing. In a letter to Iturbide, Herrera requested, in case medals and honors were to be given to various divisions for their part in the war against the Spaniards, that his men be not overlooked.[28] During the same month, he wrote that a surgeon was badly needed by his division and that his men were not receiving the proper medical care in the field. This personal interest which he always evidenced in his troops was reflected in the loyalty and respect that they accorded him.

In early 1822, delegates were chosen to the Constituent Congress. However, they were not chosen according to the method prescribed in the Treaty of Córdoba, which stated that representatives should be selected as outlined in the Constitution of 1812. Iturbide decided that an election of deputies to the Congress based on a complicated system by social classes would serve his purposes better. The new procedure provided that provinces entitled to four or more representatives should elect no more than three of them from the clergy, military or legal professions. This, Iturbide felt, would guarantee a majority of easily-influenced deputies from the non-professional people.

[26a] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 250; Parkes, op. cit., 182–183.

[27] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 524.

[28] Letter of José Joaquín Herrera to Iturbide, January 8, 1821, *Expediente de Herrera*, I, 43.

The Congress convened in the capital on February 24, 1822. There were one hundred and sixty-two deputies in that body, including delegates from Goatemala (Guatemala) which was desirous of being a part of Mexico at that time. Brigadier José Joaquín de Herrera had the distinguished honor of being elected as deputy from the State of Vera Cruz to this potentially important body.[29] Within the Congress it was soon apparent that there were three sharply divided groups on political ideology. The monarchists favored a Bourbon ruler for Mexico, as indicated in the *Plan de Iguala.* The second group consisted of the followers of Iturbide, who wanted to proclaim him emperor. It will be recalled that this had been made a possibility by Iturbide himself, in the Treaty of Córdoba revision of the succession plan. The third group, the republicans, opposed all plans for monarchy or empire. This group, in turn, was divided into those who favored a centralist republic and those who advocated a federal republic similar to that of the United States. Deputy Herrera's political philosophy placed him in the company of the creole moderate liberals who espoused the federalist system. Some of the statements that he was to make in the Congress within the next few months revealed just how far he had travelled on the road toward liberalism and republicanism since his early days as a royalist officer.

In the first general session of the Congress, the representatives took the following oath:

1. Will you defend and uphold the Roman Catholic Faith and not permit any other religion in the Empire?
2. Will you assist in drawing up a constitution for the nation based on the *Plan de Iguala* and the Treaty of Córdoba? Will you uphold the principle of the separation of powers, the legislative, judicial, and executive, in order that they may never be united in the hands of one person?

---

[29] *El Sol,* February 6, 1822. This Constituent Congress was not only important because it was the first of its kind in Mexico, but it was to have a lasting effect on the history of the nation. There was also another Herrera in this group, Manuel Herrera from Durango, who is not to be confused with José J. Herrera from Vera Cruz. *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano,* I, p. 1.

3. Will you maintain and see to it that the independence of the Mexican Nation is religiously upheld?[31]

The answer to all three questions was *"Sí, juro."* The next step was to appoint a number of committees to study the various problems before the Congress, and these were to make reports to that body recommending specific solutions. Among these primary committees were groups to study the problems of foreign relations, state and internal affairs, finance, war, justice, clerical matters, and education. Brigadier José Joaquín de Herrera was appointed to the Committee on War, along with Deputies Andrade, Orbegoso, Rivas, Sorabilla, and Robles.[32]

Herrera served in the Constituent Congress on many commissions and lesser committees concerned with military affairs, such as the size of the army, establishment of a militia, proper awards for the heroes of independence, promotions, retirement, pensions, and the like. The records of the Congress reveal that he spoke infrequently in the general assemblies and that he did his best work in committee, speaking quietly and with no attempt to create a sensation. He was chosen with four other deputies to insure the fitting commemoration of the outstanding episodes in the War for Independence and to recognize the services of its heroes. As a first move in that direction, Herrera proposed that all discharged veterans of the Trigarantine Army should, upon detachment from service, receive a *fanega* of land and two oxen. He also proposed that those who had rendered outstanding assistance to the cause should receive double time, or double pay, for the period they had served in the army.[33] On March 5, 1822, Herrera was placed on a committee with Deputies Mendiola, Alamán and Músquiz to consider military honors, prizes, and awards. This group was called *Comité de Premios.*[34] Three days later, the monotony of military considerations was broken by his appointment to a committee to propose laws governing freedom of the press.

Meanwhile, political intrigue and party politics began to make themselves felt within Congress and between Congress and Iturbide. The Spanish *cortes* had refused to recognize the Treaty of Córdoba and had repudiated O'Donojú and his work. This, of course, prevented the Bourbonists from securing Ferdinand VII or any other member of the Spanish royal family as king. Instead of supporting the group wanting to make Iturbide emperor, they joined with the republicans for personal reasons. Freemasonry spread rapidly during this period, and the Masonic lodges, under the leadership of Miguel Ramos Arizpe, became centers of republican propaganda.[35] Still another group, made up of *gachupín* merchants and officials in Mexico, plotted with the remnants of the Spanish army at San Juan de Uloa to reconquer Mexico for Spain. The leader of this pro-Spanish movement, royalist General Dávila in Vera Cruz, even asked Iturbide to join with them. When this questionable affair became known, Iturbide asked Congress to be allowed to appear before it and explain. In his explanation he not only used letters which implicated himself more than anyone else, but he went so far as to accuse eleven members of Congress of complicity.[36] This attack on the duly-chosen representatives of the people was met by Congressional removal of three of Iturbide's friends from the Council of Regency. The republicans were already disgusted with Iturbide because he had not resigned the presidency of the Regency when Congress met. This indicated his obvious desire to control that important body and assure his own preëminence. After Congress' removal of Iturbide's friends from the Regency Council, some of the deputies felt that Iturbide would use drastic measures to coerce them. There were several dramatic speeches by the deputies about crossing the Rubicon, and Carlos María Bustamante urged them to "await death in their seats, like Roman senators attacked by the Gauls," rather than to accept Iturbide's arbitrary methods. In some respects, the scene was reminiscent of the first meetings of the French Estates General in 1789 after many years of imposed vacation. There were heated debates and eloquent speeches. In fact, the people began to get disgusted with Congress after several months of discussion had not produced a constitution. It was apparent to all that the problems of peace were as great as, if not greater than, those of war.

---

[31] *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano,* I, 1–2.

[32] *Ibid.,* I, 24–45.

[33] *Ibid.,* I, 23. (Proposed by Herrera on February 28, 1822.)

[34] *Ibid.,* I, 45.

There were now a large number of troops collected in Mexico City and other large cities of the interior. Herrera proposed that these forces be distributed along the frontiers, the coasts, and particularly at ports where the Spaniards might attempt a landing. This was not the only reason for wanting the troops out of the capital. It was feared that Iturbide might appeal to them to make him emperor by force.[37] Herrera suggested that, as a matter of information, the acts of the Congress dealing with military matters be printed and distributed to the various army commanders and troops in the field.[38] He pointed out also the desirability of appointing a geographic survey commission of one or two deputies from each province to supply the government with topographical information. These data, he said, would be of great value in defense, commerce and navigation, and internal development. On April 13, 1822, this proposal was adopted with one representative from each province on the commission.[39] In an effort to cut the expense of a large regular army, Brigadier Herrera advocated a supplementary body of citizen militia. The militia would include people from all walks of life; and it was anticipated that such responsible groups as doctors, lawyers, teachers, and other professional people would give stability and dependability to that body. These people could serve part of every year and still have sufficient time to attend to their personal business. This would supply the government with a large, well-trained militia for emergency defense at less expense than the maintenance of a regular army of equal size. Herrera insisted that the militia should receive the same honors, rights and privileges, and have the same chances for promotion as the regulars for equivalent time in service.[40] The militia was to be the balance wheel of the army.

---

[35] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 183.

[36] *Ibid.;* Priestley, *op. cit.*, 252.

[37] *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano*, I, 84.

It was the custom for the Chamber of Deputies to elect its officers every month. This action gave as many delegates as possible the honor of holding some position during the meeting of the first Constituent Congress. On April 24, the Chamber elected as its officers for the following month, Cantarines, deputy from Puebla, as president and as vice-president, José Joaquín de Herrera. He received eighty votes of the one hundred thirty-seven deputies present.[41] This provided an opportunity for Herrera to get some experience in parliamentary practice and procedure which was later to be useful to him in higher administrative positions.

Congress and Iturbide continued to eye each other with hostility. In early May, Congress acted on a report of the Military Committee, of which Herrera was a member, and voted to reduce the regular army from thirty-six thousand to twenty thousand men and to organize a militia of thirty thousand. Herrera pointed out that new recruits would fill vacancies created by retirements and other causes of resignation from service.[42] Congress also passed a decree prohibiting any member of the Regency from holding any military command. This was a direct attack on Iturbide's source of power. Rather than be deprived of his control of the army, Iturbide determined on a bold plan. In spite of his differences with Congress, to the people he was still "El Libertador." With the liberal use of money, Iturbide contrived to have himself forced to accept the emperorship. On the night of May 18, a sergeant of the San Hipólito garrison, Pío Marcha, gathered a group of soldiers and *léperos* together and began to shout "Viva Agustín I." A mob soon collected in front of Iturbide's home and demanded that he declare himself Emperor of Mexico. At first he feigned reluctance and withdrew from the balcony, supposedly to confer with his associates; shortly, he reappeared to announce that he had been persuaded to accept. Iturbide then issued a statement to the Mexican people in which he asked them "to extend to me the highest proof of your love and confidence."[43] All night there was celebrating in the city. Bells were rung, guns were fired, and parades were held. At the unheard of hour of seven o'clock the next morning, Congress was assembled to vote Iturbide the crown. Congress was caught by surprise, and many members purposely absented themselves from this session. Others refused to vote. Iturbide was present, as well as many hired supporters and other followers who filed through the halls and chambers loudly acclaiming Iturbide and threatening death to any who might oppose him.[44] Under this pressure, sixty-seven members voted for Iturbide, fifteen bravely voted against him, and many more did not voice an opinion. It is most probable that Herrera was in this latter group, since he was of a cautious and reserved nature although of republican political tendencies. It made no difference that a legal quorum was not present, and it is significant that as many as fifteen voted against Iturbide. Be that as it may, Iturbide had realized his dream. The *coup d'état* had been a huge success.

---

[38] *Ibid.*, I, 110.

[39] *Ibid.*, Part 2, Vol. I, p. 27.

[40] *Ibid.*, 78–80, 197.

[41] *Ibid.*, 91.

---

[42] *Ibid.*, 273, 278; Priestley, *op. cit.*, 252. Also at this time, a Swiss named Jacob Ferrier asked permission to bring 700 to 1,000 families from Switzerland and Holland as settlers. *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano,* Part 2, Vol. I, 253.

[43] *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano*, Part 2 of Vol. I, 282. The manifesto was almost adolescent in hope and excitement: ". . . entendedme, y dadme la última de amor que es cuanto deseo, y lo que colma mi ambición. Dicto estas palabras con el corazón en los labios; hacedme la justicia de creerme sincero y vuestro amigo." May 18, 1822.

[44] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 184. These scenes also bring to mind the riotous meetings of the Estates General during the French Revolution.

Congress was in a turmoil. Many of the monarchists gave their support to the Iturbidists, but the chief opposition continued to be the radical republicans. Of these, even Vicente Guerrero and Gómez Farías temporarily supported Iturbide.[45] Although Herrera respected Iturbide for the part that he had played in breaking away from Spain, he could not and did not acquiesce in Iturbide's ambitious plan for an empire. Herrera's statements and proposals to Congress in the next few months were anything but of a monarchist or imperial flavor. Many of the deputies felt that not enough effort had been exerted to persuade Ferdinand or some member of his family to accept the throne. This meant that the original intent of the *Plan de Iguala* had been annulled. Others were doubtful whether they possessed the power to reject or accept Iturbide as emperor, since they had been selected only to draw up a constitution.[46]

One of the questions before Congress was to consider plans for Iturbide's coronation, which was to take place in July, 1822. The matter of court etiquette was another consideration on which there were widely divergent views. Deputies Herrera and Esteva, both from Vera Cruz, proposed that

> in accordance with the customs governing a free people under our constitutional monarchy, the kissing of the hand and bending of the knee be considered an offense to the dignity of free men.[47]

Republican sentiment was running stronger, and Iturbide well might have taken heed. Another interesting proposal of Esteva and Herrera was that an effort be made in the wording of official documents, laws, and decrees to break away from the terminology used by Spain in royal and viceregal documents. It was urged that a purely Mexican style be developed which would "emphasize the constitutional trend and the civil liberties of the people."[48] Herrera hoped that this new phraseology would make for national pride and consciousness and a realization by the people that they were, in reality, free and independent.

---

[45] *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano,* Part 2, Vol. I, 284. Gómez Farías, the radical reform liberal of later days, even went so far as to make a speech in Congress urging the acceptance of Iturbide.

[46] *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano,* Part 2, Vol. I, 289–293.

[47] *Ibid.,* 331. (This resolution was presented on May 24, 1822, and signed by Esteva, Herrera, Robles, and Aviléz.)

[48] *Ibid.,* 362. (This was introduced on May 31, 1822, by Esteva, Herrera, Terán of Chiapas, and González from Guadalajara.)

Herrera remembered the willingness of the people of Córdoba and Orizaba to support independence and the aid which they had rendered his forces against the royalists in 1821. Therefore, he proposed to Congress that the cities and citizens who had served the cause of independence should be properly recognized and honored.[49] He was appointed on a committee on June 10 to examine the credentials of José del Valle in order to determine his legality as a representative of Guatemala. One month later he served with Deputies Osores and Bocanegra to decide whether the representatives of Guatemala, Chiapas, and San Salvador should be admitted to Congress and whether these territories rightfully belonged under the Mexican flag.[50] To indicate further his republican ideas and liberal growth, Herrera objected to the phrasing of a resolution by Deputy Castillo in which the words "*rendir gracias*" had been used. Herrera requested that they be changed to something more suitable since such "servile terminology was not in keeping with the spirit of a constitutional system." He felt that it was the duty of the Congress to arouse and "stimulate a feeling of nationalism in the people."[51] When the argument on court etiquette came up and some wanted to leave it to Iturbide's own boundless imagination, Herrera suggested that Congress make the rules governing protocol and ceremonies of state and that simplicity be the guiding principle. The problem was then turned over to a committee for decision.[52]

As a member of the various committees on military affairs, Herrera put to good use a long military experience, and in these conferences he was very influential. New arms were needed for the militia, and when Deputy Carlos María Bustamante proposed that the government "be free to buy them from any foreign power," Herrera requested that as much of this equipment as possible be procured in Mexico. This would save time and money and encourage Mexican industry. He was supported in this view by Gómez Farías, who stated that it was more patriotic to proceed in this manner.[53] During this time, Herrera was instrumental in securing recognition of the services of Nicolás Bravo as "*beneméritos*" to the nation. Other measures were presented by the Military Committee to honor the revolutionary heroes in various ways.[54] Herrera also proposed to Congress that the salaries of military and civilian government employees be equalized.

---

[49] *Ibid.*, II, 15–20. (The resolution was introduced on June 3, 1822.)

[50] *Ibid.*, 45–50, 207–210.

[51] *Ibid.*, 51. (Statement made by Herrera in Congress on June 12, 1822.)

[52] *Ibid.*, 57. (Discussion in Congress dated June 14, 1822.)

[53] *Ibid.*, 80. At this time the few places which had manufactured rifles and powder and had cast cannon under the royalist régime no longer were operative. This resolution represented a desire rather than a possibility under the existing circumstances.

Meanwhile, Iturbide took the matter of court etiquette into his own hands. Mexico was to have all the splendor and ritual of her European contemporaries. Toward this end he began by granting titles to clerical and military adherents. Among these newly-created positions were those of

> almoner, high steward, master of the horse, captain of the imperial guard and a corps of gentlemen and ladies of the imperial bedchamber.[55]

Iturbide insisted that the crown was hereditary, and he also declared that his father, mother, sisters, and brothers, as well as his children, should be considered as princes and princesses. Having taken the oath of his new office, Iturbide was crowned with pomp and ceremony on July 25. He and his wife were resplendent in jewels—borrowed for the occasion or made of paste. At the cathedral, they heard Mass, were annointed with holy oil, and, after seating themselves on two thrones, had crowns placed on their imperial heads. The next month new color was added to the court of "His Serene Highness" by the creation of the Order of Guadalupe. There were several gradations of membership, with fifty holders of grand crosses, one hundred knights, and an indefinite number of companions.[56]

Lovers of ostentation and display as well as the mob were well pleased with the pageantry. Iturbide enjoyed striding through the *zócalo* with imperial robes trailing the ground and surrounded by guards and a crowd of people. However, the great majority of creoles had not shared in these honors. The treasury was still dangerously empty, and officers and men had to be paid. Forced loans and seizures of *gachupín* property would not for long afford the wherewithal for carrying on the government.

As Iturbide became more arbitrary, Congress became more recalcitrant. In addition, a new opponent of Iturbide's had joined that body. He was a priest, Servando Teresa de Mier, whom Dávila, the Spanish commander of the fortress of San Juan, had recently released from prison. Dávila realized that this republican prisoner could cause Iturbide much difficulty, and he proceeded to release him with that in mind. As soon as the priest had taken the seat in Congress to which he had been elected, he began to attack Iturbide and his imitation of grandeur with bitter denunciation. In August, Servando de Mier led a group of radical republicans in a plot to declare the election of Iturbide as emperor unconstitutional and to proclaim a republic.[57] Iturbide, informed of their intentions, imprisoned fifteen of the deputies, including Servando de Mier, and kept them there for several months, although he could not prove their complicity. Congress regarded this as a personal affront and as an attack on its freedom and independent action. It acted accordingly. When Congress refused to set up military courts as Iturbide desired, he threatened to reduce that Chamber to a membership of seventy. Congress then tried to placate him somewhat by agreeing that he should appoint the judges of the supreme court and that he should have the right of veto.[58] Not satisfied with this, Iturbide demanded that he have the right to veto each article of the constitution—then in the process of being drafted—that did not suit his pleasure. This was too much for the deputies, who flatly denied this proposal. Emperor Agustín promptly hurdled this obstacle by dissolving the Congress, imprisoning many of its members, and setting up in its place an Instituent Committee of his choosing.

---

[54] *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano*, II, 144. Since Bravo and Guadalupe Victoria had been imprisoned recently by Iturbide for a short time, it was rather dangerous to propose the title of "*benemérito*" for Bravo at that time.

[55] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 184.

[56] *Ibid.*, 185. Herrera was never a member of this order although Santa Anna was given membership. The Order died out after Iturbide's exile. It was later reëstablished by Santa Anna to further his own purposes.

All republicans now were under suspicion. Just prior to and after the dissolution of Congress, most of them were arrested on the rather broad and unsupported charge of conspiracy. Herrera was among those imprisoned by order of Iturbide about the sixteenth of August. He was not informed as to why he was held, either at the time of arrest or during his imprisonment. Apparently, after the arrests had taken place, Iturbide caused investigations to be made of each case. In a letter of October 29, 1822, José Antonio de Andrade wrote to Iturbide "that in accordance with his order of the 25th, he was submitting a list of those accused of conspiracy."[59] The name of Brigadier José Joaquín de Herrera headed this list of twenty-two men who had been imprisoned, and his family experienced the humiliation of having to request a permit to visit him in jail.[60] Truly, Iturbide had not forgotten the author of resolutions to do away with "kissing the hand" and "bending the knee" and many other democratic ideas and proposals in Congress. Moreover, Herrera had voted to curtail the size of his army and had opposed his appointment of supreme court judges.

---

[57] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 254.

[58] Herrera did not vote for the measure that gave Iturbide the power to name the judges of the supreme court. He felt that they should be free to act. *Actas del congreso constituyente mexicano*, II, 207.

[59] Letter of Andrade to Iturbide, October 29, 1822, quoted in *Expediente de Herrera*, I, 46–47.

Who would have predicted three years earlier that royalist Lieutenant Colonel Herrera would be one day imprisoned for espousing liberal and republican principles? Actually, Herrera was not, and never was during his entire career, a party to any scheme to overthrow the existing government by force of arms. Nothing was ever proved against him nor was any attempt made to do so. His imprisonment served only to confirm his republican convictions.

The original Constituent Congress no longer existed; but, in dissolving it, Iturbide had committed a serious political mistake.[61] He had deposed the duly chosen representatives of the people and had imposed arbitrarily an Instituent Committee which he expected to draft a constitution in accordance with his wishes. He could now be charged with illegality and dictatorship. His opponents made much of this *faux pas*. Even so, Iturbide might have been able to hold his power had there been any money in the exchequer. Generals, whose salaries were long overdue, deserted him and joined the Masonic lodges. In a quest for resources, Iturbide resorted to printing paper money and required that one-third of every salary and debt should be paid therewith. This resulted in inflation and irritated the generals, creditors, and government officials. By early 1823, the imperial crown had begun to wobble precariously on Iturbide's head.

In Vera Cruz was an officer who seldom passed up an opportunity such as this situation offered. This man was Antonio López de Santa Anna, the greatest opportunist of his age. For the next thirty years he was to foment revolution and anarchy in an effort to improve his own personal position. Always a superb flatterer, he had written Iturbide warm letters of congratulations when he had declared himself emperor. He had even come to Mexico City to appear to be interested in Iturbide's unmarried sister of sixty years of age. Although she was undoubtedly pleasantly astonished at this

---

[60] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 284. The permit was signed by the Captain General of the prison and dated October 22, 1822.

[61] In commenting later on the high purpose of the Constituent Congress, Herrera, as the then Minister of War, made the following statement to Congress on November 7, 1823: "All eyes were fixed on this meeting of the first Mexican Congress to see if it would give us a constitution, worthy of our century and the best interests of the whole American continent."—*Colección de memorias de guerra y marina*, I, Doc. 3, p. 9.

"long-delayed tribute to her charms," Iturbide was displeased and assigned Santa Anna to a command in Vera Cruz.[62]

There, Santa Anna persuaded Iturbide to allow him to try to capture San Juan de Uloa from the Spaniards. Iturbide sent his captain-general, Echávarri, to assist Santa Anna in this attempt. Santa Anna had the attack so planned that, in case it succeeded, he would be the hero. If it failed, the blame would fall on Echávarri. Not only did the plan fail, but Echávarri came so near to being taken prisoner that he wrote to Iturbide that he felt sure "Santa Anna had planned to sacrifice him for the sake of obtaining his command."[63] Iturbide was furious and decided to depose this ambitious and dangerous officer. He went to Vera Cruz to bring Santa Anna back to Mexico City with him, telling Santa Anna that he wanted to promote him and do him honor. Lying was something that Santa Anna knew about first-hand, and he saw through the emperor's scheme. Accordingly, at the first opportunity on the road to Mexico City, he slipped away from Iturbide, returned to Vera Cruz, and pronounced against the emperor.[64] The introduction of the *pronunciamento* as a means of changing the government, rather than by legally-prescribed processes, was to be the curse of Mexico for the next three decades. It was truly a criminal innovation, draining Mexico of her resources and bringing misery and hardship to her people. The counterpart of the pronouncement was the *cuartelazo,* or barracks revolt. In either case a *caudillo* opposed the government, and, at the head of a number of officers and men, made promises of reforms and wealth to all who would join him. Rival officers were bought or offered a share in the spoils. Usually, it was the group which was out of office that revolted in order to secure the best positions for themselves.

Guadalupe Victoria soon joined Santa Anna, but initial success was with Iturbide's forces. Santa Anna at one point was thinking of escaping to the United States but was dissuaded from this by Victoria. During January, a number of republicans came to his support. Vicente Guerrero and Nicolás Bravo left the capital to enlist forces of rebellion to the south. When they were captured by an officer of Iturbide's at Chaldo, he let them escape. At this point, Santa Anna's *Plan de Vera Cruz* was scrapped for a more subtle and more moderate-sounding proposal in an effort to gain greater support for the movement against Iturbide. This was the better-known *Plan de Casa Mata,* drawn up, not by Santa Anna, but by his temporary opponents who now decided to work for the overthrow of Iturbide and the establishment of the federal system.[65] In general, the provisions included the overthrow of the empire, creation of a republic, the calling of a Constituent Congress, and the adoption of a Constitution. Echávarri, who was supposed to be besieging Santa Anna in Vera Cruz, published the plan on February 1, 1823. He was supported in this by other members of the Masonic order. Even the troops of the capital marched out of the city and joined the republicans. Time was running out on Iturbide.

---

[62] Parkes, *op. cit.,* 186.

[63] Priestley, *op. cit.,* 255.

[64] Santa Anna's own version of these events is slightly warped, as usual. "His Imperial Majesty knowing that I had not been of those who favored his coronation, stripped me of all the commands which I exercised and arranged for my transfer to the capital, lacking even in the common usages of civility. Such a rude blow offended my military honor; and it tore the bandage from my eyes. I saw absolutism in all its ugliness, and I felt immediately encouraged to enter the struggle against it."—Watkins, *Memoirs of General Antonio López de Santa Anna,* 51–52.

The emperor at last realized his precarious position. He liberated Herrera and other republican members of the Constituent Congress whom he had imprisoned. He even reconvened the Congress and asked them to continue with their work of framing a Constitution. When he attempted to address Congress and explain the preceding events, Congress listened coldly and without sympathy. Injured pride and memories of days in jail were not conducive to coöperation. Herrera later characterized this attempt at reconciliation by Iturbide as "the last act of this imperial farce which bordered on comedy."[66]

Belated diplomacy had failed to restore Iturbide's power. He therefore decided to abdicate the throne and go into voluntary exile.

> On the night of March 19, Congress was assembled in extraordinary session, and Iturbide's abdication, written by his own hand, was read to the chamber by Navarette, the minister of justice.[67]

Herrera voted with Congress to accept Iturbide's resignation. Iturbide was sentenced to perpetual banishment to Italy but was granted an annual pension of twenty-five thousand pesos. On May 11, Iturbide, his wife, and eight children arrived at Vera Cruz, escorted by Nicolás Bravo. After barely escaping from an attempt on his life by his Masonic enemies, Iturbide embarked for Italy on an English merchant ship.

---

[65] Nettie Lee Benson, "The Plan of Casa Mata," *The Hispanic American Historical Review,* Vol. XXV, No. 1, February, 1945, pp. 45–56. In this article it is pointed out that the *Plan de Vera Cruz* by Santa Anna of December 6, 1822, was completely different in content and authorship from that of the *Plan de Casa Mata.* It has been a common error to attribute the latter plan to Santa Anna.

[66] *Memoria del secretario de estado y del despacho de la guerra,* November 7, 1823, in *Colección de memorias de guerra y marina,* I, Doc. 3, p. 11.

[67] Bancroft, *op. cit.,* IV, 800.

After a few months in Europe, Iturbide learned of a plan of several European countries to aid Spain in the reconquest of her colonies. Out of patriotism as well as ambition, he decided to return to Mexico to save her from this plot. His Masonic foes learned of his plans to return and had a measure passed by Congress declaring him a traitor who would be executed if he set foot on Mexican soil.[68] Iturbide had no information of these latest developments. When he landed at Soto la Marina on July 15, he was promptly arrested. Four days later the Congress of the State of Tamaulipas, which had summarily and unjustly passed sentence on him, had Iturbide shot.[69]

Thus ended the first empire. Although Iturbide deserved a better fate, his overweening ambition brought on his downfall. Had he only been satisfied with his hour of glory when he led the forces of victory and independence which threw off the Spanish yoke, he would have lived to enjoy the fruits of his labors. He was then accepted as the great Liberator; but vanity, duplicity, and love of power had brought him to this. In spite of his mistakes and human frailties, no one can deny him his place in the movement for independence. Forty years later, another Emperor of Mexico, Maximilian, was to meet a similar fate, even more unjustly deserved.

With the downfall of Iturbide, "Mexican chaos began."[70] There were to be bankruptcy and revolution, struggles between republicans and monarchists, federalists and centralists, conflict between law and order, and personal caprice. Over all ruled the triumvirate of *hacendado*, clergy, and military, bent on maintaining the *status quo* at all costs. Insistence on "*religión y fueros*," although possessing some elements of stability, retarded Mexican progress and democratic development. The republicans were now in the ascendancy, but it remained to be seen what they would do with their opportunity.

---

[68] Antonio Gibaja y Patrón, *Commentario á las revoluciónes sociales de México*, III, 19. The following article was approved by a vote of 66 to 2 on April 3, 1824: "Se declara traidor á D. Agustín de Iturbide siempre que se presenta en cualquier punto de nuestro territorio bajo cualquier título."

[69] Iturbide made the following statement before his death, saying that he had only come to help Mexico and that he was no traitor.

"Llegado al lugar del suplicio, invocando á sus compatriotas los Mexicanos pronunció una arenga ligera, recomendándoles el amor a la patria y la observancia de los preceptos de la santa religión, que los había de conducir a la gloria. Dijo que moría por haber venido a servírles, y moría gustoso porque moría entre sus paisanos, y con honor, porque no era traidor; cuya nota tampoco quedaría á sus hijos. Por último, encargó que guardasen subordinación y prestasen obediencia á sus jefes." J. M. Bocanegra, *Memorias para la historia de México independiente, 1822–1846*, I, 320.

[70] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 257.

CHAPTER IV

Herrera and Federalism, 1823–1834

The period in Mexican history following the overthrow of Iturbide, which was characterized by military anarchy and political chaos, is usually referred to as the period of the Federalist Republic. This era lasted from 1824 to 1834. It was to be replaced in the latter year by a centralist régime which lasted until 1844 and in which those unhappy characteristics were even more pronounced under the dictatorship of Santa Anna.

With the fall of Iturbide there was no executive branch of the government. Congress, therefore, placed the so-called *Poder Ejecutivo*, or Executive Power, in the hands of a military triumvirate made up of Generals Guadalupe Victoria, Nicolás Bravo, and Pedro Celestino Negrete. Although it is regrettable that all of these men were military figures, it is understandable in the light of the fact that the maintenance of the executive depended largely upon the loyalty of the army. This committee was expected to convene a new Constituent Congress and to administer the affairs of the nation only until such time as the Congress could draft and put into effect a constitution and elections could be held.

The new Congress met on November 7, 1823, with a majority of federalists having been elected to membership. The leader of the federalists was the priest, Miguel Ramos Arizpe, while the centralist cause was led by Father Mier, outspoken critic of Iturbide and the empire. The federalists wanted a republic patterned on that of the United States. Mier's group favored a strongly centralized republican government. Feeling ran high in Congress, and debates were heated and violent. For the next thirty years, the primary political question of the day was whether the republic should be federalist or centralist.

> This contest was nominally fought out over the question as to how the nation was to be constituted, whether under a federal or a central form. In reality, it partook more of struggle between the privileged and the underprivileged classes, or, to put it differently, between those who had, and those who had nothing. The clergy, the large land owners, and the militarists were usually united under the Centralist, or Conservative, standard, while the Federalist, or Liberal, party was composed, chiefly, of those creoles and *mestizos* who had felt the stirring spirit of the age, and who desired to carry into effect the reforms demanded by the slogan, "liberty, equality and fraternity."[1]

---

[1] R. A. Johnson, *The Preliminaries and Causes of the Mexican Revolution of Ayutla, 1853–1854*, p. 1 (M.A. Thesis, The University of Texas Library).

Although the division by classes in the matter of party affiliation was not always true in individual cases, it was more or less correct in the general sense. Bitter experience was to prove that strong government of a centralized nature, or perhaps a monarchial form like that of Brazil, would have served Mexico to greater advantage in those early years as an independent state. She was not ready for democratic government and federalism. In Mexico, with practically no political experience and with a large illiterate electorate easily swayed by unscrupulous demagogues, democratic processes and the federal system were doomed to failure from the outset.

Three days after Congress met, Ramos Arizpe presented a temporary governmental plan, called the *Acta Constitutiva,* which was promulgated and which served until a constitution could be written. This law was little more than a translation of the Constitution of the United States, except for a few changes, such as the establishment of the Catholic faith as the national religion.[2] It was soon apparent that the dominant group in Congress were the *moderados,* or moderate liberals, composed chiefly of creoles and *mestizos.* The resulting Constitution of October 4, 1824, reflected their views and closely resembled that of the United States. The outstanding differences were that religious toleration was not included and trial by jury was not provided. Mexico was divided into nineteen states and four territories. The territories were to be under the jurisdiction of the national Congress while the states were to elect their own governors and legislatures. The faulty system of electing the president and vice-president that was once employed in the United States was also adopted: each state legislature was to vote for two candidates, not more than one of whom could be from that state. The candidate who received the most votes was to be president; the second highest was to be vice-president. This meant that the executive positions might very well be filled by two men from two different parties, with the obvious difficulties thus entailed. Judges of the Supreme Court and the other higher courts were to be chosen in a similar manner. State constitutions were to be drafted in the same vein as that of the federal document, and care was to be exercised that no provisions be in conflict with or contrary to the national Constitution.

Of the Constitution of 1824, Priestley has said:

> . . . it was in many respects a commendable document. Though it established a unique religion, it abolished the Inquisition. Torture, mutilation, and excessive penalties were prohibited, even though secrecy in trials continued, and no attempt at a jury system was provided. A real effort was

---

[2] *Acta constitutiva* (Mexico, 1824), pp. 1–12; Priestley, *op. cit.*, 262.

> made to promote material interests, education, and intellectual progress. Its greatest defect was that it assumed to remove the Mexican people from royalism, in which they were immersed, without adequate popular education in democracy, either before or after its promulgation. Hardly had this promulgation taken place when the State legislatures began to propose amendments; they wanted to participate in all the independent functions of the national power, instead of endeavoring to accord to the new system all the prestige which loyalty and coöperation could give it. There were no great pamphleteers to issue a *Federalist* to make intelligible its essentials to the masses; and there were no masses with political sensibilities to arouse in its name.[3]

During this decade of moderate liberal control, José Joaquín de Herrera was to rise to high places in the political and military government. He was to be commandant-general of several of the states, to serve as a deputy to Congress in 1828, and finally to be promoted to the highest military rank—*general de división*—in 1833. On two occasions he was selected for the cabinet post of Minister of War and Marine. Rivera Cambas states that in all these positions he displayed "the greatest honesty and republican convictions, which assured him a good place in politics, in spite of the mediocrity of his talents."[4]

In a period when honesty and personal integrity were the exception rather than the rule in Mexican political life, Herrera, as a public servant, stood out as an example of propriety. If being moderate, reasonable, judicious, and considerate are deemed lesser virtues than being radical, precipitate in decision, vociferous, and pompous, then Herrera was mediocre. He always proceeded with caution and circumspection. He was never the swashbuckling *caudillo* type who, through meaningless promises, flamboyant rhetoric, and petty bribery sought to enhance his personal prestige or maintain his position. By precept and example he endeavored to instruct the Mexican people in the true meaning of democratic principles and government. Herrera was not colorful or ostentatious in the way that caused Santa Anna to be appealing to the masses. His political beliefs did not include as rapid progress on the road to liberalism as those of Ramos Arizpe, Lorenzo de Zavala, or Gómez Farías. But for Mexico, his course was wiser; and, had more been like him, Mexico might have been spared many sad experiences. In these ways he was outstanding and a rare figure in this period of Mexican history. Herrera, in many respects, was a man ahead of his time.

After being imprisoned by Iturbide for some four and a half months, Herrera had been released on January 3, 1823.[5] He returned as a deputy from Vera Cruz to sit in the reconvened Congress which had stolidly accepted the abdication of His Supreme Highness. Although Herrera felt that Iturbide and the empire must go, he personally regretted that Iturbide's pride and ambition had made it necessary to remove his old revolutionary chief. He was also opposed to the unjust execution of Iturbide in 1824, and, in later years, he did what he could to give Iturbide his rightful place in the hall of fame of revolutionary heroes. Notwithstanding his generous attitude toward Iturbide, Herrera was much concerned over his imprisonment and, upon his release, set about clearing his name. In April, 1823, he wrote to the Minister of War and to the Minister of Foreign and Internal Relations requesting that he be advised of the charges against him, that these be heard, and that his accusers present themselves for questioning.[6] Since none of his accusers filed accusations against Herrera, he was completely vindicated, and his name was cleared of all possible taint.

---

[3] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 264.

[4] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 271.

[5] Letter of Herrera to Minister of War, April 12, 1823, found in *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 680.

The rapidity with which Herrera was appointed and reappointed to office during the next few years was due largely to the unsettled political conditions of the country and was indicative of the tumultous period through which the nation was passing. Many of these positions were held for a matter of months, others for weeks, and a few interim appointments lasted only for days. Following his release from prison, Herrera served as Captain-General of Mexico for approximately two months, but he resigned this position on March 14, 1823.[7] He was next sent to Guadalajara as *jefe político* of that region to organize republican sentiment and to report on political conditions and popular attitudes there. He informed the *Poder Ejecutivo* that Guadalajara, Silao, Querétaro, and Celaya had adopted modified versions of the republican *Plan de Casa Mata* and that Guanajuato would soon do so.[8] In mid-July, the *Poder Ejecutivo* designated Herrera to fill the post of Secretary of War and Marine. This was a high honor and a compliment to a young man of thirty-one. Recognition of his services to the Revolution, his work on military committees in the Constituent Congress, and a long military experience had brought their reward. Here was an opportunity to apply his liberal principles to the army, which certainly had need for reorganization along more modern lines.

---

[6] *Ibid.* Also letter of Herrera to Minister of Relations, April 16, 1823, found in *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 465. ". . . en 16 de agosto del año próximo pasado fué puesto en prisión por órden del Señor Dn. Agustín Iturbide, sin hacersele saber la causa hasta el 3 de enero del presente año, día en que se le puso en absoluta libertad, y siendo esto la mejor prueba de no haber ningún cargo o causa legítima, y conviniéndole por tanto tener conocimiento de sus acusadores, A. V. E. suplica se sirva mandar se le dé un testimonio certificado de las acusaciones, citas, diligencias que en la causa seguida en dicha época conste, bién sea en contra o a favor: en lo que recibiré merced y gracia." Excerpt from the first letter.

[7] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 459. Letter of resignation dated March 14, 1823.

[8] Letters of Herrera to Minister of War dated June 13 and 18, 1823, found in *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Docs. 352 and 360.

Herrera was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the death of Colonel Ignacio García Illueca, who had been Minister of War. He found himself in a more or less conservative coalition cabinet. The cabinet was composed of Lucas Alamán, strict and able conservative, as Minister of Foreign and Internal Relations; Pablo de la Llava, as Minister of Justice and Clerical Affairs; Francisco de Arrillaga, as Minister of Finance; and Herrera as Minister of War.[9] Herrera knew the members of the *Poder Ejecutivo* intimately, particularly Nicolás Bravo, with whom he had besieged Puebla in 1821.

As Minister of War, Herrera sought to inspire in the army a "love of liberty and a feeling of responsibility to sustain the laws of the nation and to maintain public order."[10] He hoped that the army would become the "defender of the people rather than their oppressor," as in times past. Since the Spaniards still occupied the fortress of San Juan de Uloa and Spain had not recognized Mexico's independence, it was necessary to keep a sizeable force on hand. However, in an effort to increase efficiency and to cut expenses which were much higher than the treasury could meet, Herrera desired to reduce the number of troops. He felt that almost "the whole army should be replaced by the younger, new generation." There were too many "old and tired" soldiers in the service whose usefulness had passed and who now constituted a drain on the treasury. These men, he felt, should be retired and pensioned and "another generation should take their place on the field of honor." Herrera proposed to Congress that a law be passed reorganizing the military service "in keeping with our republican institutions."[11] Herrera insisted that the military rank and file had been "essentially obedient" but that what was needed were laws and regulations clearly defining lines of authority and responsibility, with loyalty to the constitution and the national government set above all else. He pointed out that political events had had a more than normal effect on the army and that they were largely responsible for its lack of organization and discipline. He felt that if the responsibility of the troops were made plain beyond any doubt and that if seniority of commanders and the superior law were made known to them, they would be obedient and trustworthy.[12] In all of this, Herrera realized that training and instruction for the army were essential.

---

[9] F. P. Arrangoiz, *México desde 1808 hasta 1867*, II, 152; J. M. Bocanegra, *Memorias, 1822–1846*, I, 285.

[10] "Memoria del Secretario de Estado y del despacho de la Guerra, presentada al Soberano Congreso el día 7 de noviembre de 1823 al Sr. José Joaquín de Herrera," quoted in *Colección de memorias de guerra y marina,* I, Doc. 3, p. 5.

[11] *Ibid.,* 12, 19.

On September 3, 1823, a law was passed which established a general staff, or *estado mayor,* as a separate planning division of the army. The staff consisted of forty-two members, representing all branches of service. This group was to collect topographical information, formulate war plans, provide an effective defense, and see to it that military science and tactics were taught as "an art."[13] Examination was to precede appointment to the general staff in order to assure the selection of the most capable officers. Herrera also placed promotions in the army on a merit basis rather than on a basis of personalities. The law of October 24, 1823, limited the number of officers of certain ranks; there were to be only fourteen generals of division, eleven generals of brigade, and similar reductions in the lower ranks. In an effort to eliminate the feeling that those in the army were entitled to special privileges and that the soldier was superior to the civilian, he stated that the "soldier should aspire to no higher title than that of citizen."[14] He advocated special training for the young men who would be the future officers of the army and to whose hands the future protection of the nation would be entrusted. Hating war for its futility, its misery and suffering, he nevertheless maintained that "since war is a science, it has become necessary to study the sad art of killing men."[15]

As Minister of War, Herrera also advocated a strong citizen militia. This body was to be trained in times of peace at slight expense to serve in times of emergency. Members not only would be trained, but they could also continue to follow their normal occupations during the greater part of each year without interruption. This program, he reasoned, would be less costly than the maintenance of a large standing army and would possess the added advantage of causing less disruption to the national economy.

Since Spanish reconquest remained a real menace, Herrera pointed out the need for more fortified coastal cities and recommended the repair of old fortifications, particularly along the Atlantic. Arrangements were made to buy rifles and munitions from the United States. His reforms even included a new saddle for the cavalry—the old type being considered "not serviceable and even ridiculous."[16] Herrera requested funds for better housing facilities and beds for garrison troops. He proposed that the two powder factories, now inoperative, be put into production and that others be added. Cavalry regiments were strategically deployed along the coasts and frontiers. Herrera hoped to make army life attractive as a career by granting pensions, retirement privileges, and better pay to soldiers.[17] This program, it was planned, would supply the necessary new recruits by voluntary enlistment. Provision was made whereby able enlisted men might rise from the ranks if qualified to hold a commission. He urged that a badly needed medical-surgical corps be established under a surgeon general. Instruction for the army, he maintained, was a necessity, since "oppression grows out of ignorance."[18] Herrera suggested that the military college, then in Mexico City, be moved to Perote where the students would not be distracted by the busy atmosphere of the capital. He greatly admired France, with her thirty thousand soldiers in normal schools in Paris alone, and urged that her example be followed.

---

[12] *Ibid.,* 10.

[13] *Ibid.,* 14, 19.

[14] *Ibid.,* 26.

[15] *Ibid.,* 29.

The Department of Marine had been added to that of War, but Herrera confessed that personally he knew very little about that branch of the service.[19] He proposed to Congress that a loan be obtained for the purpose of purchasing a frigate and eight corvettes in the United States. This would have constituted quite an addition to the existent Mexican navy, which consisted of twelve small ships. Unable to get the money required, Herrera did obtain two schooners and six gunboats which were used against the Spanish at San Juan in an effort to blockade the fortress. He recommended that naval personnel be trained for both land and sea operations. Plans for a Naval Academy at Tepic to train officers adequately for this type of duty were initiated. Herrera began the clarification and codification of the naval and maritime laws, since the old Spanish laws on this subject were voluminous and contradictory.[20] He decreed that voluntary enlistment should take the place of press gangs. It was recommended that all ports of easy access be fortified against possible invasion. Mexico's long coastline was reason enough to make her a maritime nation, and accordingly he urged the creation of a merchant marine to add revenue to the national treasury. Navy yards, docks, and repair facilities were recommended to Congress.

---

[16] *Ibid.*, 34–36.

[17] Hernández y Dávalos, *Colección de documentos*, II, Doc. 251, pp. 594–595, gives the Decree of July 23, 1823, which granted special considerations to those who fought in the wars for independence.

[18] "Memoria de 7 noviembre de 1823," *Colección de memorias de guerra y marina*, I, Doc. 3, p. 40.

[19] "Memoria del Secretario de Guerra y Marina, José J. Herrera, presentada al soberano Congreso Constituyente Mexicano, noviembre 7, 1823," found in *Colección de memorias de guerra y marina*, I, Doc. 4, p. 3.

[20] *Ibid.*, 10.

Many of these military and naval reforms were accomplished, while others, requiring large sums of money, had to be postponed. The distressed condition of the *erario* was the chief reason for postponement. The *Poder Ejecutivo* tried vainly to balance the budget. The treasury was temporarily replenished by the sale of tobacco through a state monopoly and by the negotiation of an English loan of sixteen million pesos at exorbitant interest rates and at a ruinous discount.[21] Herrera's budget for the army alone was for 9,922,782 pesos, due to the large force which was still maintained to guard against possible Spanish attack. The budget for the navy was a modest 723,014 pesos, making a total expenditure of approximately ten and a half million pesos for war and navy departments. The result could only be continued government by deficit. The high cost of eleven years of revolutionary war, an almost complete stoppage of production of all kinds, and the resort to foreign loans at disadvantageous rates were to place Mexico in such a financial plight that, until the age of Porfirio Díaz, the efforts of her best financiers to extricate her from the financial bog were hopeless. The vicious cycle was complete when revolution after revolution followed, led by disgruntled military leaders who wished to control the distribution of what scant funds were available.

When the new Constituent Congress met on November 7, 1823, Minister of War Herrera pledged his support to that body and made his first official report on the general condition of his department. He encouraged Congress to proceed quickly with the urgent business of drafting a constitution. Mexico has paid "a thousand tributes to the ignorance of three centuries, its youth and inexperience and the fever of revolutions." He added that "in your hands the fate of the nation lies."[22] Lest any member of Congress fear imprisonment or interference in his task, Herrera pledged that

> The Mexican Army offers you those arms and the same sword which divided two worlds and broke the scepter of tyranny . . . it will always be an indestructible wall protecting the Mexican Congress.[23]

The work of this Congress in contributing the Constitution of 1824 has already been discussed. Within a week after its promulgation, elections were held. Guadalupe Victoria and General Nicolás Bravo were elected president and vice-president, respectively. Guadalupe Victoria was a popular hero but had little to recommend him for this new task. He had refused to accept a Spanish pardon in the dark days after the execution of Morelos and had spent two years and more alone and starving in the wastelands as a fugitive. These exploits endeared him to the people, but they were hardly a guarantee of statesmanship. In addition to the nineteen states, there were the territories of the two Californias, New Mexico, and Colima under the federal system. A Federal District was formed which included Mexico City. A regular Congress was installed and the judicial system was established. The presidential term was set at four years. The unfortunate experiment in Mexican democracy was under way.

---

[21] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 260.

[22] "Memoria del Secretario de Estado y del despacho de la Guerra, presentada al soberano Congreso el día 7 de noviembre de 1823," *op. cit.*, I, Doc. 3, p. 4.

[23] *Ibid.*, 5.

In October, 1823, according to Article 5 of a decree of the 24th of the month, Herrera had been elevated to the rank of *General de Brigada.*[24] Officially, he held the cabinet post of Minister of War until March 11, 1824, at which time he was replaced by General Manuel de Mier y Terán. Actually, he had been called upon by the administration to go to Guadalajara some weeks earlier as a trouble shooter for the government. There, the General quieted minor outbreaks against Congress and the proposed federal system.[25] No sooner had this task been performed than he was asked, on February 10th, to go to Michoacán as commandant-general of that state.[26] Scarcely a month had passed when he was assigned to the same position in the State of Yucatán.[27] He left Michoacán in the hands of his successor, Colonel Pablo Erdozain.

As commandant-general of the state, Herrera was in complete charge of military affairs in that area. He was responsible for the order and discipline of the troops and the disposition of all forces under his command. He was also expected to aid the governor and other civil authorities in the execution of their duties. Herrera always worked in harmony with the civil officials and tried to make them feel that they could depend on his support.

During the summer of the following year, General Herrera went to Guadalajara to take command of a regiment of cavalry.[28] When he took leave of the people of Jalisco on September 6, he issued a public proclamation thanking the inhabitants and the state officials for their coöperation; he also thanked his soldiers for their loyalty and all of the people for their support of the government and constitutional development.[29]

---

[24] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524. *(Hoja de Servicios.)*

[25] Arrangoiz, *México desde 1808 hasta 1867,* II, 164.

[26] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 336.

[27] *Ibid.,* Docs. 343 and 348. On March 30, 1824, Herrera wrote to the Minister of War expressing his appreciation for the confidence shown in him by the government in this appointment. Herrera stated he had taken command on March 13.

[28] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 765. A letter of Herrera to Minister of War, dated August 9, 1825, states that he arrived in Guadalajara to take

The first republican administration, under Victoria and Bravo, was able to maintain relatively good order. A general was sent to each state capital as a representative of the federal executive. Although there was a survival of militarism and an occasional revolt by a dissatisfied general, the federalists were able to maintain peace. Meanwhile, the old followers of Iturbide and the monarchists began to recover from the setback suffered when Iturbide was forced to abdicate. These people were responsible for several minor outbreaks caused by the return and summary execution of Iturbide. Wealthy landowners, clergy, and the majority of the educated classes viewed with some alarm the proposals of the liberal administration. Victoria attempted to weld together these divergent groups by drawing his government officials from all parties.

Two branches of Masonry also played a conspicuous part in the political picture at this time. The royalists and conservatives tended to belong to the *Escoceses*, or Scottish Rite Masons. They favored the restoration of the kingship. The York Rite Masons, or *Yorkinos*, were usually the liberal creoles and *mestizos* and generally were not so well educated as the conservatives. United States Minister Joel R. Poinsett considered that he was aiding the cause of democracy by encouraging the organization of York Rite clubs. When his zealous efforts took the form of meddling in Mexican politics, coupled with his efforts to purchase Texas from Mexico, he fell into such disrepute that he had to be recalled by his government.[30] Before his recall, Poinsett made an interesting

---

command of the cavalry regiment as directed. In mid-June, he became the commandant-general of that area and, at first, had difficulty with the Iturbidist faction. Bravo and Negrete aided Herrera in restoring order.

[29] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 763. Proclamation issued to the inhabitants of Jalisco. ". . . Mis amigos todos. No me separo de vosotros sin el sentimiento más profundo, por más que procure templarlo la consideración de que me puesto vá á ser mejor desempañado por el digno General de la República que hoy me releva. . . . Yo parto: haced recuerdos á mi memoria: que alla me sea más y más grata cada día por la continuación de vuestro amor al órden, por vuestra fidelidad á las instituciones que nos rigen y por el brillo de las virtudes que os adornen. Guadalajara, 6 de setiembre de 1825. José J. de Herrera."

[30] Letter of Joel R. Poinsett, Minister to Mexico, to Secretary of State Henry Clay, July 27, 1825, quoted in *Justin H. Smith Papers*, II, 168. "It appears to me that it will be important to gain time if we wish to extend

observation on the workings of the new Mexican democracy.

> The machinery of a Representative Government is new to them, and they cannot put it into moderately rapid motion. 'It either gets the mastery and whirls round with astounding velocity, or it moves by their impulse heavily and painfully.[31]

Financial problems continued to plague Mexico. The chief sources of revenue were from the customs, the *alcabalas,* the excise tax, the monopolies, and a low tax on metals. Indian tribute had been discontinued. Seaports were opened to the commerce of the world, except Spain, and an import duty of twenty-five per cent was imposed. The *alcabala,* or sales tax, added another eighteen per cent. These high duties induced smuggling on a large scale, and a long, low coastline encouraged this illicit traffic. The total governmental income for the year 1825 was between nine and ten million pesos. Appropriations for the army alone reached twelve million pesos; this compares with a total governmental expenditure of more than eighteen million pesos. Having assumed the responsibility for debts incurred by the viceroys and the revolutionary government, the administration found itself with an additional seventy-six million pesos deficit. Rather than tax the Church and landowners, or drastically reduce the size of the army, Victoria decided to borrow abroad. This decision was to result in Mexico's becoming the economic dependency of foreign capitalism for the next half-century. Two more loans were floated in England for more than three million pounds each, but at such discount rates that only half of the money ever reached Mexico. The first of these was used for the purchase of second-hand military equipment, much of which had been used at Waterloo.[32] Britain was first in the field of Mexican economic penetration by virtue of her cottons, her merchant marine, and the early efforts of H. G. Ward, British *chargé d'affaires,* whom the Mexicans found to be very *simpático.* By paying court to Guadalupe Victoria's mistress, the Countess Regla, he acquired great influence over the president and became a power in the nation's internal politics.[33]

---

our Territory beyond the Boundary agreed upon by the Treaty of 1819 (with Spain). . . . Most of the good land from the Colorado to the Sabine has been granted by the State of Texas, and is rapidly peopleing [*sic*] with either grantees or squatters from the United States, the population they will find difficult to govern, and perhaps after a short period they may not be so averse to part with that portion of their Territory as they are at present."

[31] Letter of Poinsett to Secretary of State Henry Clay, January 20, 1827, in *Justin H. Smith Papers,* II, 227.

[32] Parkes, *op. cit.,* 190.

[33] *Ibid.,* 191.

Meanwhile, after leaving Guadalajara in September, 1825, Herrera held several minor governmental commissions. Early the next year, he was appointed Director of the *Cuerpo Nacional de Artillería.* As director, General Herrera reorganized that branch of service and placed particular emphasis on the training of gunners. It was his view that these men needed more specialized training than the average soldier.[34] His progressive program drew the praise of the Minister of War, who complimented him on the "good organization and instruction" found in the National Artillery Corps.[35] He served in this capacity until January 7, 1828; this was one of his longer appointments during this period of frequent political change.

Herrera gave up his military career momentarily in early 1828, in order to return to Congress as a member of the Chamber of Deputies. Although the termination date of his previous appointment as Director of the National Artillery Corps is given as January 7, he had already been elected as Deputy from the State of Vera Cruz and was present in Congress for its opening session. On January 1, 1828, President Victoria delivered his annual message to both houses of Congress. He was conducted to the platform by a deputation of six members from both Chambers, Herrera having been selected to head the delegation from the Chamber of Deputies.[36] General Herrera was soon appointed chairman of the *Comisión de Guerra,* where his previous experience proved to be very valuable. He proposed that new arms and equipment be procured for the active militia. Looking toward the reorganization of cavalry units, Herrera proposed to give them additional training and instruction.[37] He further suggested that a special commission of one representative from each state and territory be selected to implement all the provisions of the army reorganization law of February 14, 1824; many of these provisions had not as yet been put into effect. Herrera had a personal interest in this law since it had been passed at his instance during his term as Minister of War. The measures to improve the cavalry and artillery branches of the army were considered to be supplementary to the general law of 1824.

In April, Herrera was placed on the joint congressional Committee on Constitutionality.[38] It was the duty of this committee to pass on the constitutionality of the laws enacted by Congress before they were sent to the Department of Justice for final review. Liberal measures coming before Congress uniformly received Herrera's support. He also voted for the amnesty law to be extended to the rebels who had supported the *Plan de Montaño* of December, 1827.[39] Herrera urged that additional presidial companies be set up in Tamaulipas and other border provinces in order to give greater protection to the settlers. He advocated the strengthening of the defenses in the Californias and the assignment of an Assistant Inspector to aid the commandant-general of Lower California. Herrera himself was asked to serve on the Committee of Public Safety and Government—a committee which had a direct relationship with his duties relating to military affairs. In all this he worked in close coöperation with the War Department. At the suggestion of the Minister of War, Herrera recommended that the various states furnish the War Department and other government departments with geographical and statistical information concerning all phases of development in their areas to be available for use by the national government.[40]

---

[34] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524. The date of his appointment is given as February 25, 1826.

[35] Letter of Minister of War to General Hererra, dated February 29, 1826, found in *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 681.

[36] Juan A. Mateos, *Historia parlamentaria de los congresos mexicanos,* 1828, V. 6.

[37] *Ibid.,* 8–9, 12.

[38] *Ibid.,* 129. He was appointed on April 13, 1828.

The work of this Congress was of a more or less routine nature and Herrera's part in it was primarily in connection with military matters. He seemed to be a bit more active than he had been in the Constituent Congress of 1822, but, even so, his speeches were infrequent and brief. During the first half of the year he appeared to be more conspicuous than during the last months of the session when he was replaced on some of the committees on which he had been serving. When, in late October and November, 1828, trouble began to brew for the administration, the government requested that Herrera's absence from the Chamber of Deputies be approved by that body and the State of Vera Cruz in order that he might accept a federal appointment of "great importance." This was subsequently granted. For the moment, however, let us consider the general political scene before discussing Herrera as Governor of the Federal District.[41]

Although Guadalupe Victoria managed to stagger to the finish of his presidential term, elections for the new president and vice-president were not to go smoothly. The first real breakdown of constitutional order had come in 1827, when the conservatives had organized a rebellion under the leadership of the recently-converted Vice-President Bravo. This general gradually had been won away from his original moderate liberal beliefs. However, the movement had been successfully put down by the government forces under Vicente Guerrero. Bravo was exiled for his trouble.[42] In the forthcoming elections, the conservatives decided to support the *moderados'* candidate, Manuel Gómez Pedraza, who was a scholar and a gifted speaker. Not having a candidate of their own who was likely to be elected, they thought that Gómez Pedraza was preferable to the radical liberal candidate, Vicente Guerrero. The futility of the elective method in Mexico was soon apparent, and the substitution of bullets for ballots followed. Guerrero was the popular choice, due to his democratic personality and brilliant revolutionary record. Gómez Pedraza, however, was Secretary of War, which meant that the army under his command could "persuade" state legislatures. The final count revealed the election of Gómez Pedraza as president, by a vote of ten states to nine, and of Anastasio Bustamante, a former admirer of Iturbide, as vice-president.

---

[39] Mateos, *op. cit.*, 130. This was further indication of his moderation and generous attitude.

[40] Mateos, *op. cit.*, 166.

[41] *Ibid.*, 276.

The supporters of Guerrero felt that they had been robbed. They appealed to Congress to declare Guerrero the popular choice. The Chamber of Deputies agreed, but the Senate continued to uphold Gómez Pedraza. It is probable that the radical liberals might have accepted the results of the election, although unfavorable, had it not been for Santa Anna's decision to pronounce for Guerrero. Santa Anna had not been satisfied with the scant recognition he had received for his part in overthrowing Iturbide. He fancied himself as the liberator of Mexico and the founder of the Mexican Republic, but this viewpoint was not universally conceded. He had been trying to make up his mind whether to join the federalists or centralists, but this situation offered splendid possibilities for self-aggrandizement, and he threw his support to Guerrero.[43]

Although President Victoria was able to defeat Santa Anna's forces, that master of duplicity succeeded in persuading his conquerors to accept him as their leader. When Lorenzo de Zavala, deposed governor of the State of Mexico, led a revolt in the capital, Gómez Pedraza saw that his cause was hopeless. He resigned his office and fled the country. The method of changing governments by force of arms had now become a precedent. It is difficult to say which was the worse, the cause or the remedy, illegal elections, or resort to violence to decide the issue. During the confusion, the mob held the capital for several days and burned the Parian market with great loss, particularly to the foreign merchants.[44] By the end of January, quiet had been restored, and Guerrero was declared president by Congress. Anastasio Bustamante was allowed to remain as vice-president.

---

[42] The plan was called the *Plan de Montaño* and was proclaimed on December 23, 1827. Details of the trial of Bravo and others are found in J. M. Tornel, *Breve reseña histórica*, 93–97, 166–265.

[43] Watkins, *Memoirs of General Antonio López de Santa Anna*, 64–65, in which Santa Anna describes his reasons for supporting Guerrero.

"In order to spare evils and not to become enveloped in the whirlwind which was preparing itself, I adhered to the pretensions of the people who were pleading that Don Vicente Guerrero be declared constitutional president of the republic.

"It required only three months for me to defeat the attacks of the partisans of the minister [Gómez Pedraza] who in vengeance declared me 'outside the law.' Nevertheless, the popular movement assumed such great proportions that the pretender became frightened and disappeared, embarking in disguise for the United States."

During this period of disruption, General Herrera remained the staunch advocate of constitutional procedure. He took no part in the revolutions against Gómez Pedraza. On the contrary, he had supported Gómez Pedraza in the elections since he belonged to the same political party, the moderate liberals. For several weeks, Herrera was kept busy in his rôle as trouble shooter for the government. President Guadalupe Victoria had called him from the Chamber of Deputies to take over the interim appointment as governor of the Federal District from November 4, 1828, until December 8, of the same year. He was governor during the riot of the *léperos* in the market place, but after four days of mob violence Herrera managed to gather enough troops to disperse the rioters and rescue President Guadalupe Victoria, who sat alone in the *palacio nacional,* deserted even by his servants. General Filisola, commandant-general of Mexico, was conveniently out of the city at the time, and Herrera was assigned his duties in addition to his own.[45] To complicate the situation further, Guerrero had been chosen as Minister of War in December, following his supposed defeat at the polls. This may have been done in an effort to keep him loyal to the government; but, in that case, it was ill-advised. In the few days required for Guerrero to arrive to take office, Herrera was asked to execute the duties of War Minister.[46] Following these more or less concurrent assignments, Herrera was sent to be commandant-general of the State of Puebla on December 9, 1828. This he doubtless considered a welcome relief from the political confusion of the capital. In the same months he put down the revolt of General Melchoir Múzquiz. He was facilitated in doing this because many of Múzquiz' troops joined him in support of the federal government. This was largely due to the tremendous local influence of Herrera in that area.[47]

---

[44] Parkes, *op. cit.,* 194–195; Priestley, *op. cit.,* 266–268.

[45] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 522 (Letter of President Guadalupe Victoria to Herrera dated November 4, 1828, signed by Juan D. Cañedo, First Secretary of State, appoints Herrera as governor of the Federal District.); *ibid.,* Doc. 685 (Herrera takes over the command of General Vicente Filisola as commandant-general of Mexico during his absence, dated November 5, 1828); Mateos, *Historia parlamentaria,* V, 276, 288. On October 28, 1828, the Minister of Foreign and Internal Relations asked the Chamber for permission to appoint Herrera to a "very important post of public service."

[46] Bocanegra, *Memorias,* I, 497.

During January, 1829, Herrera seemed to be having financial difficulties. He wrote several letters to the War Office and to other government officials in an effort to collect back pay that had been due him since 1821.[48] Other letters were written requesting funds to pay troops and to ready defenses against possible Spanish invasion. He also wrote that the official military records which had been kept in Puebla were not in satisfactory condition for deposit and future use in the Archives of War.[49] During March, disturbances in Orizaba and Córdoba were suppressed by Herrera's soldiers.[50] The middle of March, Herrera was taken off the active duty list and placed *en cuartel,* a type of reserve status at less pay. This may have been a rebuff by President Guerrero for his not giving him active support against Gómez Pedraza.

The long-awaited Spanish invasion came during the summer of 1829, and, temporarily, took precedence over party strife. Generals forgot problems of back pay with the new prospects for promotion and glory. Herrera had been sent to San Andrés Chalchicomula on July 14, to prepare for the defense of that city. When the Spaniards actually landed at Tampico, Herrera marched to defend Jalapa and Vera Cruz while Santa Anna, hoping to cover himself with honor, hurried to Tampico although without receiving any orders to do so. There he found the Spaniards besieged by yellow fever. He also learned that the fleet which had brought them had sailed away, leaving the invaders to their own resources. Under these circumstances, the Spanish commander could do nothing but surrender to the Mexicans. Santa Anna presented his account of the capitulation in such a way that he was proclaimed the hero of Tampico.

Meanwhile, Herrera was endeavoring to return to active duty by requesting that he be removed from reserve status.[51] The reply of the president through the War Department was that he remain in *cuartel* for the time being. During November, 1829, it was rumored in the capital that the garrisons of Campeche and Mérida were mutinous and that Santa Anna, Melchor Múzquiz, and others were hatching a plot in Jalapa to seize control of the government. Herrera was requested by the federal government "to place himself in contact with the *ayuntamiento* of Jalapa in order to discover if this were a certainty."[52] Herrera confirmed their suspicions and reported general unrest and dissatisfaction with the liberal régime.

---

[47] *Ibid.*, 500.

[48] Letter of Herrera to Minister of Hacienda, dated January 5, 1829, found in *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 472. Herrera says that "he realizes that the treasury is in distraught circumstances but so are his own finances."

[49] *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 484.

[50] *Ibid.*, Docs. 492, 686. Letters of March 14 and 20, to War Department.

[51] *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 510.

The liberals had lost their chance, owing to lack of leadership and to party differences between *puros*, or radical liberals, and *moderados*. Guerrero was not well educated and spoke Spanish incorrectly. He, therefore, was not at ease in the wealthy creole social circles of the capital. The conservatives deeply resented being governed by a *mestizo* and a son of a peasant and continually conspired against him. Others who had supported him in the ousting of Gómez Pedraza had not received the political preferment they had expected. When Guerrero, who had been granted dictatorial powers by Congress to repel the Spaniards, delayed in giving up these plenary powers, opportunity was afforded for his opponents to raise the cry of "dictatorship." Vice-President Bustamante, with scarcely an ounce of loyalty in his veins, promptly pronounced against Guerrero and for "constitutionality and high principles."[53] He was aided and abetted in this superficially noble aim by Santa Anna—that ever-ready exponent of revolution for personal enrichment. The ensuing spectacle was one which made Mexican politicians infamous. Bustamante issued the *Plan de Jalapa*, persuaded the government troops there to rebel against the government, and called on the people to overthrow Guerrero. Not lacking bravery, Guerrero left his office in the hands of General Bocanegra and took the field against his disloyal friends. The ambitious Bocanegra soon declared for himself, and Guerrero, beset on all sides, had to retreat to the South where he joined his old revolutionary friend, Juan Álvarez. General Quintana drove Bocanegra out of the presidential chair within a few days and installed the Chief Justice, Pedro Vélez, as president until Bustamante could return.

By February, 1830, Bustamante was ready to assume office, but Congress was in a quandry as to a method of legitimizing his administration. If the original election of Guerrero and Bustamante were declared null and void, then Bustamante could hold neither office. The shameful expedient of declaring Guerrero mentally incapacitated for the presidency was used. The attack of the vice-president on the chief executive was an act of sheer constitutional sabotage. Its real motivation was love of power, money, ambition, and the desire to control political patronage. The desire for money and the lack of sufficient funds to pay officials, military leaders, and the ordinary expenses of government were to be the curse of Mexico for generations and the greedy basis for most of her political upheavals. Guerrero held out for almost a year. He established another government at Valladolid, only to be driven to Acapulco by Bustamante's forces. There, he was lured on board an Italian merchantship and treacherously betrayed to his enemies by the ship's captain for fifty thousand pesos. He was unrighteously declared a traitor and executed by a government decree on February 14, 1831.[54]

---

[52] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 560.

[53] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 268; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 89–101.

What was the government, if any? From one day to the next, the answer changed. However, in all of the above-listed illegal acts, Herrera had no part.

> His name did not appear among those who proclaimed the *Plan de Jalapa* which in 1829 overthrew Guerrero, neither can he be seen to figure in any manner during that tyrannical period.[55]

Herrera's guiding principle was legality, constitutional processes, and democratic procedure for the determination of issues. He saw that Mexico's primary need was public men of unswerving integrity who would uphold constitutional law and order at all costs. However, with peculation, malfeasance, and instability all around him, it is most remarkable that he remained steadfastly true to his high principles. In a political milieu where dishonesty, disloyalty, and an expedient conscience paid better dividends, it was made doubly difficult. Yet, through all this, Herrera remained respected and honored by all parties and worked with and was loyal to all groups who observed constitutionality.

Political and social peace for Mexico was something to be dreamed of, but was far distant—a century away. With the overthrow of Iturbide, the incompatible elements of democratic liberalism, conservatism, monarchism, militarism, and personalism erupted and set off a veritable Parícutin. The continual rumblings of revolution were to be heard for a hundred years, with pressure and heat liberated in two terrific blasts in the War of the Reform and the Revolution of 1910. The white heat of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic period burned out the dross of French political, social, and agrarian abuses and discontent in a scant twenty years, but a slower purification and longer period were required for their counterparts in Mexico. Such was to be her unhappy history and to earn for her the title of "a land where peace breaks out once in a while."

---

[54] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 195; Priestley, *op. cit.*, 268.

[55] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 271.

On November 21, 1829, Herrera was taken off the reserve list and given command as commandant-general of the State of Oaxaca.[56] One of the reasons that he had been on limited duty status was his ill health. He had been suffering from a stomach disorder and a tumor of the mouth.[57] He remained in Oaxaca until December 31 of the same year, at which time he was appointed second in command of the Reserve Army. Continued ill health and partial political disfavor were to keep him on this reserve assignment until April 31, 1831, much to his disgust.[58]

Much of Herrera's time during the next few months was spent in writing to the Minister of War concerning changes of duty, return to active command, requesting back pay long overdue, and a leave of absence to go to Córdoba to attend to personal business.[59] In May, he applied for a month's leave to go to Córdoba to recover some debts and to straighten out property difficulties which had arisen as a result of the death of a relative. He subtly remarked that one of the reasons that it was necessary to collect these debts was that he had not been receiving his full salary as general *en cuartel*. In November, 1830, he was paid part of the salary that was due him, but he vigorously protested the "terrible discount" levied by the government. He estimated that the government was still in arrears to him in the amount of some seven hundred pesos. He complained that "a soldier of the revolution should not be so shabbily treated and that he had spent half of his money in recovering from his illness and that his family was actually in need."[60]

Apparently, Bustamante was not disposed to show special consideration to a general who had not openly supported his *coup d'état*. However, not wishing to alienate Herrera completely, he finally gave him military command of the State of Durango on April 22, 1831.[61] Bustamante's régime was one of pure militarism and civil service corruption. He was an ardent centralist, whose political policies were largely formulated by the influential and capable Lucas Alamán. Some positive gains were made, however, in reducing the national debt to some extent and in putting down brigandage and smuggling. Herrera's political beliefs placed him just left of center. This means that in some instances his views coincided with those of the more liberal conservatives. Since the conservatives were always in need of additional votes, they continued to bid for the moderate liberal support. In this way, Herrera was able to hold office regardless of which party was in power. Of course, when the moderate liberals were in control, he enjoyed positions of greater prominence and prestige than under a conservative régime. The conservatives hoped eventually to win him over to their viewpoint, something that had been accomplished in the case of Nicolás Bravo and others. Although Herrera realized the necessity of coöperating with the centralists as long as constitutional processes were observed, he was not to succumb to their invitations to join their party. He remained loyal to conservative liberalism throughout.

---

[56] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, 524; II, Doc. 513.

[57] *Ibid.*, II, Doc. 511. Letter of Herrera to Minister of War, dated October 28, 1829, requests that he be returned to active duty and that he now feels well enough to take an active part in affairs.

[58] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 524.

[59] *Ibid.*, II, Docs. 432, 434, 690, 691.

[60] *Ibid.*, Doc. 694. Letter of Herrera to the vice-president, dated November 10, 1830.

[61] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 524; II, Doc. 415. In the latter document, Herrera expresses satisfaction over his appointment.

Widespread dissatisfaction soon developed with the Bustamante government. Disapproval of the unjust execution of Guerrero and of Bustamante's arbitrary methods were the chief causes of discontent. Santa Anna could not pass up such an opportunity. Always motivated by "the will of the people" and in this case by the general demand to reorganize the cabinet and for the "proper observance of the Constitution," he pronounced against Bustamante. The aspect of constitutionality had evidently not occurred to him when he had earlier declared for Bustamante against Guerrero. Consistency, however, was not one of Santa Anna's virtues. Santa Anna began by seizing the customs receipts at Vera Cruz and taking possession of the port early in 1832. News of the revolt spread to other provinces, where support was given to the movement for the purpose of restoring suspended civil liberties.[62] Federalists everywhere adhered to the revolt, and by December Bustamante was ousted and exiled. Lip service was paid to belated legality by calling from exile Gómez Pedraza to complete the remaining three months of the term for which he had been originally elected in 1829. Santa Anna considered this to be a good idea, for it gave him time to prepare for the forthcoming elections as a presidential candidate. When the elections were held, Santa Anna emerged as president and the liberal, Gómez Farías, as vice-president. For good measure, Lorenzo de Zavala was reinstated as governor of the State of Mexico.

---

[62] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 196.

How would the hero of Tampico conduct himself as president? He treated the capital to a spectacular entry in January, being welcomed by beautiful young ladies in four carriages who carried pictures and tokens of his victory.[63] When inauguration day arrived, Santa Anna said he was too ill to take part in the ceremonies and remained at his hacienda of Manga de Clavo near Jalapa. This placed Vice-President Gómez Farías in charge of the government. The exchange of the presidential chair between Santa Anna and Gómez Farías was to occur no less than eight times during Santa Anna's administration of three hundred and eighty days before he openly denounced federalism. The explanation is that Santa Anna knew full well that the liberal majority in Congress and the ardent federalist, Gómez Farías, would immediately put into effect numerous liberal reforms. He proposed to view their effect from a safe distance and then decide on a course of action.

One of the first reforms of Gómez Farías was directed at eliminating the *cuartalazo* and *pronunciamiento* as methods of changing the government. This was to be done by reducing the size of the army; also, officers were to be deprived of special privileges, or *fueros*. Church privilege and educational monopoly were also attacked. Payment of tithes was no longer to be compulsory. Appointment to clerical office was to be made by the federal government. Monks and nuns were to be free to retract their vows if they so desired. The University of Mexico, which was functioning inadequately, was closed, and a law was enacted to provide for free and compulsory secular education. Indian missions along the frontier, which were considered no longer fulfilling their purpose, were abolished and their funds appropriated.[64]

Wealthy creoles, clergy, and military chiefs objected loudly and strenuously to this attack on class and privilege. The program was courageously conceived but poorly timed, since the liberal party had only recently assumed power, and the president's personal viewpoint was not clearly defined. In addition, the wealthy and educated classes of society were almost unanimously opposed to the proposed changes. Santa Anna returned to the presidency in May, 1833, to quell the brewing storm. He played a cagey game, neither espousing the reforms nor disavowing them. At the same time, he showed himself willing to listen to the protests of the opposition. When revolt against the government occurred in the provinces, Santa Anna left the presidential office again to Gómez Farías and marched in June to suppress the revolutionists. While on the march, Santa Anna's troops revolted, "took him prisoner," and proclaimed him dictator to his great satisfaction. When Santa Anna's adherents in Mexico City revolted in favor of the dictatorship, Gómez Farías promptly put them down. His six thousand troops for the defense of the capital caused Santa Anna to reconsider. Santa Anna then contrived to escape from his benevolent captors and returned to reassume his office. Added to the discontent and confusion was the dreaded plague of cholera that swept the country. The rattle of funeral carts was heard day and night, while the yellow and black banners indicating the epidemic were seen over the city for months. Priests attributed the plague to wrathful divine visitation as a consequence of the liberal attacks on the Church. With his finger on the national pulse, Santa Anna decided that it was time to suspend, at least temporarily, the liberal program of Gómez Farías and the majority party.

---

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 270.

Herrera served as commandant-general of the State of Durango from April 22, 1831, until June 5 of the same year. His next appointment was still related to military affairs, but in a new rôle—that of judge in the Supreme Military Tribunal.[65] When the vice-president of that august judicial body, Ignacio Rayón, died on February 6, 1832, Herrera was selected to fill the vice-presidency of the court.[66] Although his judicial duties kept him busy, Herrera found time to write several letters to the War Department in which he requested promotion to the rank of general of division. He pointed out that several officers, among them Santa Anna and Mier y Terán, who were junior to him in point of service and previous rank at the time of the Revolution for Independence, had now been promoted above him. He remarked that, although he was the author of the law of October 24, 1823, restricting the number of generals of certain grades, it was not intended that promotion of those of lesser experience and training should precede those of longer service.[67]

Herrera had no part in the resort to arms which overthrew Bustamante in 1832, although the garrison of Mexico City, which he temporarily commanded, declared its support of Gómez Pedraza in December, 1832, after his success had been assured. No doubt he rejoiced inwardly to see the retributive justice of a sort that removed Bustamante from the presidency in the same violent manner by which he had attained it. Moreover, with the return of Gómez Pedraza as Chief Executive, the moderate liberals were in power once more, and Herrera was a member of that group, as well as a personal friend of Gómez Pedraza. On January 3, 1833, Gómez Pedraza entered the capital to complete three months of the term to which he had been elected four years earlier. His cabinet, as might be expected after two years of conservative dictatorship, bristled with liberals. Minister of *Relaciones* was Bernardo González Angulo. The post of Justice and Church Affairs was filled by the constitutional writer, Miguel Ramos Arizpe. Gómez Farías took over the portfolio of *Hacienda,* and General José Joaquín de Herrera accepted the ministry of War and Marine.[68] This was Herrera's second experience as a cabinet minister in control of military and naval affairs. He was to hold office only until the new elections were held, but he was returned to the cabinet in the same position shortly thereafter. His first period of office was too brief to accomplish much. It did allow the liberals Arizpe, Gómez Farías, and Herrera time to formulate plans for the widesweeping liberal reform program affecting Church, army, and wealthy landowners which was to be put into effect with the election of Santa Anna and Gómez Farías later in 1833.

---

[65] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524. Date of appointment is given as June 6, 1831. *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Doc. 419. Herrera was replaced in Durango by Col. Juan de la Peña y del Río.

[66] *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Doc. 696. The President of the Supreme Military Tribunal announced Herrera's replacement of Rayón on February 7, 1832.

[67] *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Docs. 349, 351. Letters of Herrera to Minister of War dated February 9 and 16, 1832.

In early January, 1833, Herrera became governor of the Federal District. He had held that office earlier for an interim appointment of one month during November of 1828. His tenure on this occasion was of slightly longer duration, lasting until April 15.[69] During his administration as governor, a new election law, insuring freer voting and prescribing the method for electing deputies from the district to Congress, was promulgated.[70]

It was also Herrera's duty to publish publicly in the Federal District the text of a treaty of friendship, commerce, and amity with the United States, dated February 27, 1833.[71] This treaty affirmed existing friendly relations and intentions. It provided for reciprocity in trade and commerce and included a "most favored nation" clause. Other provisions related to regulations regarding admiralty cases, claims, piracy, contraband, estates of citizens dying abroad, and many other items needing clarification.

---

[68] M. A. Peral, *Diccionario biográfico mexicano,* 385; Bocanegra, *Memorias,* II, 371-372.

[69] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, 524. On January 11, 1833, Secretary of War notified of Herrera's appointment as governor, signed González, Secretary to the President. *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Doc. 355.

[70] *Relaciones: Colección de leyes, 1831-1834,* Biblioteca de Relaciones, decree dated January 9, 1833, and signed José J. de Herrera.

[71] *Relaciones: Colección de leyes, 1831-1834,* document headed "El Ciudadano José Joaquín de Herrera, General de Brigada y Gobernador del Distrito Federal," to the inhabitants of the Federal District, February 27, 1833.

Another decree of Governor Herrera exempted Spaniards who had fought for independence from the law of March 20, 1829, which had been designed to expel all Spaniards from Mexico. He added that those Spaniards who had aided the cause of independence were deserving of "special consideration and honor" and certainly should not be required to leave the land that they had defended.[72] An attempt was made to improve roads, public health, and education in the Federal District, but lack of time prohibited any great progress.

In the middle of April, Herrera was placed in command of the permanent militia as inspector general.[73] This was another short-term assignment which lasted until May 17 of the same year. Herrera had continued during the preceding year to press for his promotion to general of division. On May 10, he wrote to Santa Anna that he had been continually passed over; he complained that General Barragán had received the promotion which should have been his in 1825. He had remained silent at the time, but since then other officers junior to him had been made division generals.[74] The following day, Herrera was given the highest military rank that the Mexican army had to offer, *general de división.* Santa Anna issued the decree authorizing the promotion and stated that General Herrera's conduct "presents a model of dignity to the army" and "in all justice to him, this rank shall be considered to date from September 1, 1826."[75]

With the advent of Santa Anna and Gómez Farías to the executive branch in the spring of 1833, Herrera was called upon to take again the portfolio of Minister of War and Marine in the liberal cabinet. Santa Anna wanted him as much for his liberal views, which were pleasing to the majority party, as for the fact that Herrera's high sense of loyalty and legality would lead him not to revolt against the government. Since the Minister of War controlled the armed forces, this was no small consideration. On May 18, 1833, Herrera replaced Francisco Gómez de Parada, who had filled the post temporarily at the request of Gómez Farías.[76] Herrera was to serve in this post for the better part of two years. For a brief time, owing to ill health, he was forced to resign from the cabinet in November, 1833, but he returned soon thereafter. The liberal reform program, planned in January, was ready for launching, with General Herrera directing the reorganization of the army and fostering much of the legislation aimed at the removal of military privilege and abuse.

---

[72] *Relaciones: Colección de leyes, 1831–1834.* This collection of laws and decrees, found in the Library of Foreign Relations in Mexico City, does not give page or document numbers. They are, however, filed according to dates. The above reference is a decree, dated March 13, 1833, signed by Herrera.

[73] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 524. Appointed April 16, 1833.

[74] *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 700.

[75] *Ibid.*, II, Doc. 298. Decree signed by President Antonio López de Santa Anna, dated July 5, 1833. With the liberal party in political control, Santa Anna could well afford to honor one of its leaders. This apparent friendship was to continue until Santa Anna's dictatorship in the 1840's completely alienated Herrera.

Herrera endeavored to regenerate the spirit and morale of the army by putting promotions on a merit basis and formulating a complete official list showing relative ranks, dates of service, etc. of all officers in the army.[77] On June 5, a law was passed whereby military and civilian officials who betrayed oaths of office could be summarily removed. He violently attacked the evil of paying off political debts by granting military command to incompetents. He pointed out that many persons had been given jobs and emoluments "as recompense for their services" while, on other occasions, this had been done in an effort to win them away from their political party beliefs.[78] The excessive number of military and civil employees, known as *empleomanía,* constituted a heavy drain on the national *erario.* These political parasites merely drew their pay while their work went hopelessly unattended. Herrera urged that it was far better to give lands to the many veterans of the War for Independence than to give them jobs for which they were not qualified. This would promote agriculture and other pursuits as well as reduce the ridiculously large government payroll.[79] Many generals, while lacking experience in the field and possessing no tactical knowledge, had received promotions through political favor. This, too, was to cease and training and study were to be emphasized and rewarded. Herrera proposed to remodel the military college at Chapultepec, but lack of funds prevented its accomplishment.[80]

---

[76] Bocanegra, *Memorias,* II, 417; *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524.

[77] Manuel Dublán and José María Lozano, *Legislación mexicana,* II, 1827–1834, pp. 520–521. This was similar to our Army and Navy Registers, showing file numbers and relative ranks. This definitely *fixed seniority.* Decree dated May 24, 1833.

[78] "Memoria del Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de la Guerra," p. 2, in *Memorias del ministerio de la guerra, 1822–1834,* dated April 11, 1834, signed by José Joaquín de Herrera.

[79] *Ibid.,* 2–3. Addressing Congress, Herrera used these words: ". . . desgraciadamente hemos adoptado el principio de premiar con empleos militares, acciones muy loables que pudieran tener recompensa con destinos en otras carreras, ó con la repartición de terrenos baldios en que abunda la Republica."

In the matter of defense, Herrera recommended that old fortifications which had fallen into decay be repaired and that new fortresses be built along the coasts and frontiers, particularly in Texas.[81] Although the army was reduced in numbers, twenty-nine presidial companies were left on the frontier and in the interior, aided by fifteen companies of active militia. This did not include six presidial companies in the Californias, to whom Herrera gave special commendation for the protection of Mexican lives and property in the vast lands under their surveillance.[82]

The executive granted power to the Minister of War to do all he could to "reëstablish order and preserve federal institutions."[83] With this authority, Herrera initiated more stringent regulations regarding desertion and fixed more severe penalties for officers who pronounced against the government or adhered to subversive plans.[84] Military units with an excess of officers were reduced to standard complements. Every three months commanders were required to send reports of changes in personnel, promotions, and the general condition of their forces to the Minister of War.[85] These reports were to be used in keeping the official register up-to-date, and to aid the Secretary of War in making his annual report to Congress. Herrera recommended to Congress that laws be passed clearly defining the line of demarcation between the judicial jurisdiction of commandants-general and the Supreme Military Tribunal. It appeared that there had been some conflict, since, in many military cases, the commandants-general of the various states served as courts of first instance before review or appeal to a higher court.[86] He also proposed that the Supreme Military Court be given permanent status in order to strengthen its position. Its relations with the Supreme Court of Justice were to be more clearly delineated. Herrera proposed an almost complete rewriting of military rules and regulations so as to point out to "each official his duties and responsibilities" beyond any question.[87] The existing condition of military law, he felt, caused as much confusion as the revolts themselves and, in some ways, was responsible for these outbreaks.

---

[80] "Memoria de Guerra," April 11, 1834, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[81] *Ibid.*, 5–6. ". . . que aquellas y estos se hallen en el mayor deterioro, y como desde luego no hay posibilidad de su reparación, ni tampoco de establecer algunas obras de esta clase en los puntos fronterizos, especialmente el de Tejas, el Ejecutivo se reserva á iniciar oportunamente á las Cámaras las Leyes que convengan á tan importante fín."

[82] "Memoria de Guerra," April 11, 1834, *op. cit.*, p. 6. "Los habitantes de esos terrenos inmensos, no tienen otra garantía para la seguridad de sus vidas y de sus fortunas, que aquellos buenos soldados."

[83] Dublán and Lozano, *Legislación mexicana*, II, 1827–1834, p. 532. Decree of June 8, 1833.

[84] *Ibid.*, 540–547.

[85] *Ibid.*, 562. Decree of October 10, 1833.

[86] Memoria del Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de la Guerra," dated April 11, 1834, *op. cit.*, 9.

New regulations were issued by Herrera concerning neatness and sanitation in barracks and military prisons.[88] The medical corps was reorganized under a Chief Surgeon with a salary of fifteen thousand pesos a year. Herrera proposed to Congress that there should be a second in command to take charge of this corps in the event of the death of the Surgeon General.[89] Cabinet Minister Herrera pointed out that there was a lamentable lack of skilled doctors and surgeons in the army medical corps. This he attributed to low pay and to better living conditions in the city. He warned that steps must be taken to make the army medical profession more appealing if the health of the army was to receive adequate attention.[90] Herrera objected to the law of September 30, 1833, which abolished the battalion of incapacitated veterans. These veterans were to be returned to their respective states and their care given over to the states themselves. He reminded Congress that most of the wounded veterans were now in the capital and had few or no funds to move their families to another location. Herrera maintained that the care of veterans who had been wounded in the defense of the *patria* should be a federal concern. He suggested that the law of September 30 be modified to reëstablish the *batallón de Inválidos* and that they be allowed to remain in the capital.[91] In a similar vein, he petitioned Congress to see to it that widows and orphans of veterans who had been killed in service of their country should be promptly paid their *montepío,* or pension allowances. Governmental negligence in attending to these matters quickly had resulted in numerous cases of misery and want. The government, Herrera said, must not be unmindful or appear to be ungrateful for their services.[92]

---

[87] *Ibid.* ". . . Atendamos también a que ella parte de la falta de muchas leyes que llenen todos los objetos, y que con arreglo al sistema que felizmente nos rige, demarquen a cada autoridad sus atribuciones y responsabilidades."

[88] Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, 543. (Decree of July 23, 1833.)

[89] *Ibid.*, 581. (Law of November 12, 1833. The law also covered regulations governing military hospitals.)

[90] "Memoria del Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de la Guerra," April 11, 1834, *op. cit.*, 7–8. ". . . [los médicos] hay entre nosotros con esta circunstancia, son muy pocos y tan bien acomodados, que dificilmente han de sujetarse a un corto sueldo y a las penalidades consiguientes a la campaña, dejando los goces que disfrutan en las capitales con el ejercicio de su carrera."

[91] "Memoria de guerra," April 11, 1834, *op. cit.*, p. 7. ". . . Más de cuatrocientos hombres que portan honrosas cicatrices en defensa de la patria, muchos absolutamente inútiles, y casi todos carcados de familia, establecidos en la capital y con una miserable fortuna, preciso es que esciten en su favor la compasión del Cuerpo soberano (Congreso). ¿Cómo separar de sus hogares y de sus deudos á multitud de individuos, cuya imposibilidad física no les permite ni aun moverse del lecho doloroso en que están postrados? . . ." Herrera pleads with Congress for the wounded veterans.

Herrera noted that, due to lack of funds, the production of armament in Mexico and laboratory experimentation had all but ceased. He observed that the Spaniards had maintained a factory for the manufacture of rifles, carbines, and other small arms which was "second to none." He asked why this factory had not been reopened in order to give Mexican artisans employment and to prevent having to buy abroad at additional cost to the government.[93] Another outstanding fault with the existing armament was that so many different calibres were found in use, making it very difficult to obtain ammunition of the proper size. This was particularly true of the cannon, most of which needed recasting, or, at least, reboring. Herrera encouraged a standardization of equipment and the promotion of local armament and munitions industries.

The army as a whole was reduced in size. The infantry and cavalry were cut to a minimum. However, other long-neglected branches of the service were increased to give the army better balance. The engineers, the artillery, and the medical corps were among those receiving special attention. Battalions of the Vera Cruz garrisons were to be restored to full complement. Losses in these units during the revolutions of 1832 had reduced them to less than half strength.[94] By a law of November 17, 1833, bodies of troops which "in whole or in greater part had revolted against federal institutions" were to be abolished.[95] Time was taken to correct partially an evil of ten years' standing. The family of Agustín de Iturbide was invited to return to Mexico and the pension of twenty-five thousand pesos a year that had been granted to him in 1823 was restored to his family. Finally, the ashes of the revolutionary leader were to be placed in an urn in an honored place in the capital.[96]

In the interest of efficiency and economy, Herrera proposed a closer liaison between the Office of *Hacienda* and his own department. Apparently, the Treasury Department had been paying the salaries of retired soldiers and officers without furnishing the War Department with a record of expenditures. Such matters, Herrera maintained, rightfully belonged under the jurisdiction of his department.[97] All persons handling the disbursement of military funds were required to render strict and periodic accounts of expenditures. General Herrera continued to press for a large citizen militia as a safeguard of the nation and a counterbalance of the regular army. This he considered safer and less costly than to try to maintain a large standing army. He pointed out that added saving could be made by using the many retired officers with previous instruction as a nucleus training group for the militia.[98] To buttress his argument, he pointed to the widespread use, to successful advantage, of citizen militia in many European countries. He proposed that the militia be divided into two parts—the permanent and the civil militia. It would be the duty of the states to organize these bodies and to arrange for local enrollment.[99]

---

[92] Memoria de Guerra", April 11, 1834, *op. cit.,* p. 8.

[93] *Ibid.,* 4. "¿Porqué no hemos de reponer este establecimiento á fin de fomentar a nuestros artesanos, y que este capital circule en la Nación?"

[94] "Memoria de Guerra," April 11, 1834, *op. cit.,* p. 6.

[95] Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.,* 599.

[96] *Ibid.,* 579. Decree of November 4, 1833.

In order to lessen the number of desertions, many of which were due to forcible enrollment in the army, he recommended voluntary enlistment as the means of obtaining new recruits. Herrera desired to protect the morals of his troops by closing houses of ill repute. A law was passed even banning a foreign gambling game known as *bagatela*.[100] The sale of *pulque* and other intoxicating beverages was prohibited near places where troops were quartered.[101]

Minister Herrera included in his reorganization program the revamping of the central Department of War. Five sections were set up to handle the various aspects of the nation's military affairs. The first dealt with the movements of the army, correspondence with commandants-general, and related matters. The second section had jurisdiction over all problems related to the infantry. A third division was for the cavalry. Another unit managed the affairs of the navy. The fifth section was charged with direction of artillery and engineers. In addition, the Military Archives were put in a state of usefulness.[102] An effort was made to reduce the working staff of the War Department to the lowest possible number while still maintaining efficiency.

The naval picture was anything but bright. The navy numbered only eight ships, including schooners and gunboats. No new construction was under way, and only repair facilities were maintained. In the past fifteen years, no naval establishments had been built. In short, the navy had all but ceased to exist. Herrera was Minister of Marine as well as War, and he had requested three hundred and fifty thousand pesos for naval improvement. Congress did not see fit to grant this request. In his report to Congress on April 11, 1834, Herrera repeated his appeal for funds.[103] He reminded Congress that ships were needed to patrol the coasts for protection and to prohibit smuggling. The lack of a navy sufficient for adequate defense lessened the effectiveness of Mexican diplomats in foreign relations. It also invited invasion by foreign powers with stronger naval forces.[104] The prevention of smuggling and the resulting increase of revenue from customs receipts would more than cover the expense required to create satisfactory naval defenses. One of the chief reasons for the navy's decrepit condition was that there had been little Mexican naval experience and tradition. The army, on the other hand, had a long and glorious history and was well represented by lobbyists in Congress. The navy was also at a disadvantage in not having an officer of sufficient rank to carry weight in the joint council of war. About all that Herrera could do in this regard was to point out the desirability of strengthening the navy and to repeat his requests for Congressional appropriations.

---

[97] "Memoria de Guerra," April 11, 1834, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[98] *Ibid.* "Existen muchos gefes y oficiales de honor é instrucción que servirían de base para su arreglo."

[99] "Memoria de Guerra," April 11, 1834, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[100] Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, 644. Law enacted December 9, 1833. Many other gambling games were allowed to exist.

[101] *Ibid.*, 650. Decree of November 18, 1833.

[102] "Memoria de Guerra," April 11, 1834, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

As already mentioned, Herrera resigned as Minister of War in November, 1833, and was replaced briefly by General Miguel Barragán.[105] Herrera was in poor health and needed several months to recuperate from his arduous duties as reform minister.[106] He was able, however, to serve again as a member of the Supreme Military Tribunal. Since this work was not so exhausting, he served from November 6, 1833, until September 29, 1834. In fact, when he returned to his cabinet post on February 13, after three months' rest, he apparently felt well enough to execute the duties of both offices.

In April, 1834, Herrera made his annual report to Congress on the state of the military branch of the government. He summarized the entire army reform program, which has been previously outlined, and suggested additional changes.[107] He stated that much helpful data which should have been included in his report were unobtainable from the commandants-general because of unsettled conditions, poor communication facilities, and the fact that troops were on the march. He decried the political and military disturbances which "have destroyed peace and public welfare and have resulted in demoralization and disorganization of government."[108] Mexican civil war, he said, "was due largely to those who place their own aggrandizement above peace" and the national welfare.[109] He painted a prospective picture of peace and prosperity for Mexico where peaceful pursuits were followed, "reserving the resort to arms only for the time when enemy cannon sound on our coasts."[110] He even paid tribute to Santa Anna's loyalty to federal institutions. This may have been done in order to try to hold Santa Anna in line after his recent relations with conservatives and clerical opponents of federalism had aroused the suspicions of the liberals. With tongue in cheek, Herrera stated that Santa Anna "had given an example of rare patriotism, not only refusing dictatorial power, but fiercely fighting in battle against those who had offered it to him."[111]

---

[103] *Memorias de guerra y marina,* I, Doc. 22, "Memoria de Marina, leída en la Cámara de Diputados el día 11 de abril de 1834," p. 7.

[104] *Ibid.,* 8.

[105] Bocanegra, *Memorias,* II, 462; *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524. Date of resignation is given as November 5, 1833.

[106] *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Doc. 260. On leaving the cabinet November 5, 1833, he stated that he was "completely satisfied with the work of all the people in my office, and I can not resist this opportunity of thanking them for their aid."

The suspicions of the liberals were soon justified. During the many exchanges of the presidency, alternating between Santa Anna and Gómez Farías, Santa Anna had had ample time at Manga de Clavo to appraise the strength of the rising opposition to Farías' reform program. Clergy, wealthy creoles, and overly-ambitious army officers saw in this program a death blow to their control and class privileges. During the early months of 1834, he engaged in many secret discussions with the conservative-centralist opposition. They eventually persuaded Santa Anna that he should come over to their side, thereby saving Catholicism and the nation from the radicals. When, on April 24, 1834, Santa Anna returned to the capital to reassume the executive power, he had definitely made up his mind. The cry of clergy and army officers, *religión y fueros*, obtained his support. On May 31, he dissolved the national Congress, "locked the doors of the Hall of Sessions, and put the key in his pocket."[112] His *Plan de Cuernavaca* of May 23 called on the people to support the centralist cause and to denounce the reformers who had dared to invade the sacred prerogatives of the Church. He proclaimed against liberalism, federalism, and Gómez Farías in particular. He completely changed the government, abolished state legislatures, and deposed governors and city councils who did not adhere to his plan. He was hailed by his new constituents and the clergy as the savior of Mexico and the "leader of the holiest revolution our republic has ever seen."[113] His lack of consistency was again apparent, in that he insisted for a time that the federal Constitution of 1824 was still the supreme law of the land, despite the fact that he had overthrown the federalists and the federal system. This Machiavelli of Mexican politics had now performed the astonishing feat of successfully riding radical liberal, moderate liberal, and now conservative party horses. Each change had resulted in increasing his influence and political control. He was undoubtedly the greatest opportunist of his age.

---

[107] These two reports on the army and navy have been previously mentioned in footnotes in this chapter.

[108] "Memoria del Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de la Guerra, leída en la Cámara de Diputados el día 11 abril, 1834," p. 2, found in *Memorias de guerra y marina*, II, Doc. 21.

[109] *Ibid.*, 15.

[110] *Ibid.*, 16.

[111] *Ibid.*, 17. The event alluded to occurred during the supposed "capture" of Santa Anna by his own troops in 1833.

Herrera gave the *Plan de Cuernavaca* no support. To him, Santa Anna's pronouncement was just one more travesty on justice and constitutionalism. He resigned his ministership twice, before Santa Anna, with feigned reluctance, accepted it. For a time, Santa Anna ruled without a cabinet or a Congress as a virtual dictator. In August, General Ignacio Mora y Villamil succeeded Herrera as Minister of War.[114]

The federalists had bungled their opportunity. By quarreling among themselves, the radicals, or *puros*, and the moderates, or *moderados*, had only succeeded in weakening their party to the point that the centralists could take control. Disloyalty of vice-presidents of the opposition party and the final perfidy of Santa Anna had wrought their undoing. The liberal reforms of Farías, Arizpe, Herrera, and others will be long remembered as the first real attempt at progressive national development. Herrera's work in army reorganization extended to every branch and aspect of the service, and his measures indicated a keen understanding of the Mexican military problem. He had tried manfully to abolish the practice of politicians' using the army to promote their own political advancement and had attacked the idea held by many officers that they belonged to an exclusive society, subject only to their own regulations rather than to the laws of the federal government. For these reforms and in recognition of his high personal integrity and honor, General Herrera deserved highest praise.

---

[112] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 197; *Priestley, op. cit.*, 271; Raymond Estep, *The Life of Lorenzo de Zavala*, 331–337 (Ph.D. dissertation in The University of Texas Library). Estep states that Zavala severely criticized Santa Anna for abandoning federalism. Zavala, himself, became so disillusioned and disgusted that he left Mexico to live in Texas; thereby, Mexico lost one of her great liberals.

[113] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 197.

[114] Bocanegra, *Memorias*, II, 551–552. Herrera resigned August 16, 1834.

The advent of the conservatives to power forced liberalism underground and turned federalists out of office everywhere in the republic. Those liberals who managed to hold some political or military assignment were *moderados* whom the conservatives hoped to win over. These, however, were given positions of secondary importance and influence. What the forces of reaction would do with their victory remained to be seen during the next decade, marked by their dominance.

CHAPTER V

From Political Oblivion to the Presidency, 1834–1844

Santa Anna, the former most vigorous defender of the federalist Republic, had now destroyed it. He thrived on instability, and his main mission in life seemed to be destruction. Every plan of any importance which had resulted in a change of government from the overthrow of Iturbide to the ousting of Gómez Farías had been formulated or supported by Santa Anna. To such a man the centralists had entrusted the future of the party.

Although federalism had been repudiated, the Constitution of 1824 futilely continued to exist for some time, on paper at least, as the fundamental law. After eight months of wrangling and chaos, in which government officials were changed with foolish rapidity, a new Congress met January 4, 1835. The chief contestants for seats had been members of a military-clerical coalition on the one hand and the adherents of Santa Anna and the Scottish Rite Masons on the other.[1] The army-church group won by large majorities. When Santa Anna saw that he did not have a working majority in the Congress, he resorted to his old expedient of retiring to his hacienda, leaving the presidency to General Miguel Barragán. On October 3, 1835, the two chambers of Congress met as a joint assembly and, by a decree of that date, effected a change to centralism. They then took on the rôle of a constituent assembly and drafted a centralist constitution which was proclaimed on December 30, 1836. The new constitution was known as the *"Siete Leyes,"* since it consisted of seven separate but supplementary laws. The Congress had not been elected for the purpose of drawing up a constitution; but, after ten years of federalism, its reactionary members could not resist this opportunity to accomplish a legislative *coup d'état.* Its Mexican opponents delighted to turn a phrase by calling the *"Siete Leyes,"* the "Seven Plagues."

One innovation of great importance appeared in the new document: The franchise was restricted to those who possessed an income of at least one hundred pesos a year. This restriction had an advantage in that it deprived the unlettered and irresponsible *léperos* of the right to vote, thus preventing political demagogues from controlling elections by swaying the mob. It was designed as a definite safeguard to protect the wealthy, propertied classes from legislation influenced by those who had nothing. On the other hand, it offered the possibility of a future class struggle to regain the franchise. The states were now organized into twelve departments on the French model of centralized government. Property qualifications were required to hold Congressional office—an income of twenty-five hundred pesos annually for senators and fifteen hundred for deputies. These were chosen by popular election and were to hold no other government or military post during their tenure of office. The chief executive was to be chosen in a devious manner. The Senate, the Supreme Court, and the Council of State were to submit a list of three names each to the Chamber of Deputies. This chamber in turn selected three of the nine listed and presented these to the departmental assemblies to vote for one of the three for president. The president was required to have an income of four thousand pesos. He was aided by a Council composed of thirteen members, two to be army officers and two to be clergymen. A system of courts, including a Supreme Court, superior courts, auditing courts, and courts of first instance in the departments, was provided. An entirely new body was created under the name of *Poder Conservador.* It was made up of five men of over forty years of age who had an annual income of three thousand pesos. The chief purpose of this unusual group was to assure coöperation and coördination, serving as liaison between the three main branches of government. The group was to see to it that the laws were enforced and, occasionally, to issue decrees "interpretative of the will of the nation."[2] This all-powerful body could depose the president, annul laws, and reverse judicial decisions. Priestley has said: "It was responsible only to Deity, which it barely recognized."

---

[1] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 271.

Such a cumbersome governmental machine naturally drew some criticism from all groups.[3] Particularly aggrieved were the departments, which had retained very little power. Probably, this system of checks was devised to channel the activities of *caudillos* like Santa Anna, and for that very reason he had elected to turn over his office to General Barragán and "sit this one out" at Manga de Clavo. As he had anticipated, revolts occurred in practically every state of the union in favor of states' rights, a return of civil liberties, and a restoration of the Constitution of 1824. These blossomed out into unsuppressable rebellion in Yucatán and in the secession of Texas.

---

[2] *Ibid.*, 273–274.

[3] However, several progressive measures proposed by the conservative leader, Lucas Alamán, received general acclaim. He proposed to conserve the Spanish language in its purity, to make reprints of the classics at low cost, to publish a Spanish-Mexican dictionary, to make a study of the various dialects of the Republic, and to offer prizes for the best efforts in prose and poetry. Decree of March 22, 1835, Department of Internal Relations, quoted in the *Lucas Alamán Papers,* Genaro García Collection, The University of Texas Library.

For General José Joaquín de Herrera, the era of centralism meant partial political oblivion. He and other moderate liberals, if they were fortunate enough to hold positions at all, were conveniently shelved in more or less inconsequential posts. As author of widespread army reforms under the leadership of reformer Gómez Farías, he could not expect much from the conservatives, although they did continue to bid for his support for a time. During the next ten years Herrera was to be married, was to serve as President of the Supreme Military Court and President of the Council of State, was to be in *cuartel* almost half the time, was to be imprisoned and then released by Santa Anna.

When Herrera resigned as Minister of War, he retained until September 29, 1834, his post as a member of the Supreme Military Tribunal.[4] In his administration of these duties he was known for his fairness and good judgment. With the advent of the centralists to complete power, way had to be made for party followers in the more important posts. Herrera was therefore given the position of Inspector General of the Active Militia, a command of somewhat less prestige than he had customarily held under the federalist régime. This came to be one of his longer tours of duty in a career conspicuous for its rapid changes and short assignments. He performed the functions of Inspector General from September 30, 1834, until December 31, 1837, a period of over three years.[5] As War Minister, Herrera had always been a strong exponent of the militia as a means of supplementing the army at less expense. His duties consisted mainly of inspecting the various units from time to time, issuing regulations governing the militia, recommending repair and construction of fortifications and barracks, and reporting to the War Department on the general conditions of that branch of service. Herrera insisted that members of the militia receive the same considerations and chances for promotion that were granted to those in the army with similar qualifications and length of service. Apparently, he had no part in Santa Anna's attempt to put down the rebellion in Texas during 1835-36. At least, his name is nowhere mentioned in this regard. In fact, it would have been better had Santa Anna been almost anywhere else. The victor's laurels won at Tampico against the Spaniards were torn from his forehead at San Jacinto.[6]

---

[4] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524.

[5] *Ibid.*

Meanwhile, Herrera remained in Mexico, and it was during this period that he was married. It is regrettable that so little is known of the courtship and marriage of José Joaquín de Herrera. His great-nephew, Ricardo Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, wrote a three-volume work entitled *Historia genealógica de las familias más antiguas de México* in which he states that Herrera married Doña Dolores Alzugaray in Córdoba in 1835.[7] The month and day are not given, and Diego Ortega, great-great-nephew of Herrera and son of the author, has no additional information on this subject.[8] Possibly Herrera had met Doña Dolores during revolutionary days when he spent much time with his troops in Córdoba and Orizaba. Perhaps he saw her for the first time when he came to Córdoba in 1830, to collect the debts that were owed to him. Although there is no available picture of Señora Herrera, she must have been a beautiful woman, judging from a picture of her two children, José Joaquín and Dolores.[9]

Doña Dolores later became the fourth *Marquesa* de Herrera while José Joaquín rose to the rank of colonel under General Miramón and Maximilian. Although his father never belonged to the Order of Guadalupe, the young José, or "Quino," as he was called by the family, was made a *caballero* in that order by Maximilian. Both of these children were to die without heirs.[10]

Herrera was a fine father and a considerate husband. His home life was very happy, and he was much interested in providing a good education for his children.[11] Diego Ortega, great-great-nephew of the President, made the following appraisal of his illustrious kinsman:

---

[6] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 199.

[7] Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," 5, *op. cit.*, II.

[8] Interview by the author with Diego Ortega y Roa in Mexico City, March 26, 1946. Sr. Ortega stated that since Herrera's children died without succession, family records, letters, and information of this nature were not preserved. Sr. Ortega's great-grandmother on his mother's side was General Herrera's half sister.

[9] This is a very faded old picture similar to a tintype with a silver finish. It was probably made while Herrera was President of Mexico during his second administration and shows the young José Joaquín standing in full dress uniform to the right of his father, President Herrera, seated with his daughter, Dolores, sitting on his left. Another young lady is seated on Dolores' left whom Diego Ortega says was called "Lenore," who lived with the President's family in the National Palace. The fact that Señora Herrera does not appear in the picture leads one to think that she was not living at the time.

[10] José Joaquín, Jr., may have had illegitimate children, but if so, they were never legitimized or recognized. Sr. Ortega said that when someone named Herrera claimed to be a direct descendant of the former president in a newspaper article several years ago, he asked his aunt if the president's son had any children. Her answer was "No."

> [He was] very kind to his children, very helpful to his brother-in-law, my great-grandfather, Don Diego N. Alcalde, who had married his [Herrera's] sister, Doña Ana María de Herrera, having on the death of my said great-grandfather, taken to live with him his two children: my grandmother, Doña María Remigia, and her sister, Doña Josefa Andréa Alcalde, who were without resources, and they lived with him until he died, first in the Monte de Piedad and later in the National Palace in which quarters were reserved for the Presidents at that time.[12]

General Herrera not only took care of his immediate family and relatives but performed many acts of kindness for widows, orphans, and the poor.[13] His letters and military record in the Military Archives reveal many instances in which he aided widows and orphans of veterans to obtain their *montepío* pensions. He was kindly, even-tempered, and reasonable. His home life, as well as his public life, was above reproach.

During 1837, Herrera became hard pressed for funds. This is not surprising, since the government had not been prompt in paying its generals, particularly those of opposite political tendencies.

---

[11] Letter of Herrera to José M. Tornel, Minister of War, April 17, 1842, quoted in *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Doc. 716. Herrera says: "I have never sought any command, aspiring only to being well thought of, to receive my regular pay, although it be only two-thirds of what it should be, in order to give my children an education and a decent subsistence."

[12] Letter of Diego Ortega to the author, dated March 28, 1946, Mexico, D.F.:

Muy señor mío y amigo:

Mucho me interesaría que añadiera usted a los estudios que ha hecho sobre mi tío bisabuelo, el General Don José Joaquín de Herrera, la convicción que tengo yo por tradición de familia, de que fué persona excelente en su hogar.

Muy bueno para sus hijos, muy servicial con su cuñado, mi bisabuelo Don Diego M. Alcalde, quién estuvo casado con su hermana, Doña Ana María de Herrera, habiendo, a la muerte de mi dicho bisabuelo, recogido a sus dos hijas: mi abuela Doña María Remigia y a su hermana Doña Josefa Andréa Alcalde, quienes quedaran sin recursos y vivieron con él hasta que murió, primero en el Monte de Piedad y después en el Palacio Nacional en las habitaciones reservadas entonces a los Presidentes.

Mucho estimaré que añada usted estos datos que, además de que son de justicia, tengo agrado en manifestar a usted como un testimonio de gratitud por la noble actitud de mi tío bisabuelo hacia mi abuela y su hermana Doña Josefa Andréa, quién fué mi madrina de bautizo. . . . Diego Ortega.

[13] Many of these people were present at his funeral as attested by *El Siglo XIX,* February 11, 1854, p. 4. "Among those present were many women and poor people whom Herrera had helped."

Herrera, therefore, made a financial proposition to the government which is not without its humorous aspects. He proposed to the government that he be allowed to borrow thirty thousand pesos from the Bank of Ario, with his back pay as security.[14] The Minister of War passed this puzzler to the Congress for decision. Congress promptly passed the request along to the Commission on Industry for advisement.[15] A period of five years elapsed before the committee informed Herrera that the loan could not be granted on that basis.[16] While the governmental red tape was unravelling, Herrera and his family might well have starved, but, apparently, he was able to make other arrangements.

While Herrera was leading a comparatively quiet life as Inspector General of the Active Militia, the conservative government was having a difficult time. Finances, politics, and international relations were in a deplorable state. Acting President Barragán had died in office on March 1, 1836, one day before the Texans declared their independence from Mexico at Washington-on-the-Brazos. He was briefly replaced by the virtually unknown José Justo Corro. During the year, Spain, who sympathized with the conservatives, finally recognized Mexican independence. Three years later, the first Spanish minister, Ángel Calderón de la Barca, arrived in Mexico with his versatile New England wife, who was to write a very vivid description of *Life in Mexico* while she lived there.

Corro's attempts at internal harmony were fruitless. Texas won her independence April 21, 1836, at the battle of San Jacinto and the surprised and defeated Santa Anna was in national disgrace. Anastasio Bustamante was recalled from France whither he had been exiled by Gómez Farías. He was considered by the conservatives to be the most likely presidential possibility that the present circumstances had to offer. He was, therefore, elected in April, 1837, for the eight-year term as provided by the *Siete Leyes.* Liberals who had been fooled by his promises of reform soon deserted him and his reactionary program. Federalist revolt rumbled in the provinces. The territories of San Luis Potosí and Sonora plotted secession during 1837. There was a plan to establish an independent Republic of the Sierra Madre, made up of the northern provinces. This scheme had the blessing of Sam Houston of Texas and was to be presented in varying forms for the next twelve years.[17]

---

[14] *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Doc. 96.

[15] *Ibid.,* Doc. 103.

[16] *Ibid.,* Doc. 709. Decree of February 10, 1842.

[17] Priestley, *op. cit.,* 291–292.

Foreign intervention in 1838 brought momentary unity.[18] The French, chiefly, and several other foreign nations had claims against the Mexican government, due to damages sustained by their nationals in the sack of the Parian market in 1828 and to other property destruction suffered by them during the numerous revolutions. Total French claims, which were greatly padded, were set at six hundred thousand pesos. One of the largest of these was for damage to a French restaurant in Tacubaya which was listed as a sixty-thousand peso loss. The Mexican government admitted its obligations but just as freely admitted its inability to pay. France then sent a fleet of twenty-six ships and four thousand men to collect her debts.[19] The British roared disapproval and sent a fleet of their own to keep an eye on the French. The United States, which had insisted on issuing the Monroe Doctrine unilaterally rather than jointly with England, sat back to watch her more powerful naval neighbor enforce its provisions.[20] The French fleet bombarded the fortress of San Juan de Uloa and forced its capitulation. Mexico immediately declared war on France and the invasion was given the sarcastic title of "French Pastry War" by the Mexicans.[21] Santa Anna was called to Vera Cruz for advice, which was that he be placed in command. An early morning attack on the city by the French almost resulted in Santa Anna's being taken prisoner; he managed, however, to escape in his underwear.[22] That afternoon, the Mexicans counterattacked as the French were returning to San Juan. Santa Anna had the misfortune of having his leg shot away by a cannon ball, but the good fortune of thereby regaining his lost reputation. He returned to the capital where both he and his leg received separate honors and acclaim. The episode ended in British mediation of the debt question, the resulting decision being satisfactory to both contestants.

---

[18] President Bustamente tried to rally his people against the French. On March 31, 1838, he made the following speech, quoted in part:

"Mexicans, since it is the sacred duty of the leaders of all nations to speak to their citizens when an internal danger threatens their interests and well-being, this obligation takes on a higher and more national aspect when a foreign war threatens us. Then the voice of the Chief Magistrate is the center of all opinions, of all parties, and without hateful divisions of civil turmoil and calls upon all to defend the dignity, rights and honor of the *patria.*" *Documentos históricos de México*, Serie 22, I, 1829–68, in an article entitled "El Presidente de la República Mexicana a Sus Habitantes, 1838," p. 4.

[19] The great cost of the expedition indicates that France had more in mind than merely collecting damages.

[20] Statement of diplomatic policy by the United States in 1823, to the effect that European nations could keep what possessions they then held in the New World, but any attempt to acquire more territory or to meddle in the political affairs of any American nation would be regarded as an unfriendly act. Speech of President Monroe to Congress on December 21, 1823, quoted in Parker T. Moon, *Imperialism and World Politics*, 410. However, the United States depended on Britain for many years to enforce its principles.

[21] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 206.

[22] *Ibid.*, 207.

Completing his three-year assignment as Inspector General of the Active Militia, General Herrera was placed *en cuartel* by the government on January 1, 1838. He was to remain in this reserve status until December 31, 1839—a period of two years. This was done by the government in an effort to lessen expenses, but it did not improve his personal financial status. Of course, officers of the liberal party were the first to be put on the reserve list. Bustamante, no doubt, recalled that Herrera had served in the Gómez Farías cabinet at the time Farías had exiled him to France. Placing Herrera and other liberals on reserve may have had the aspect of a purge as well as of saving money.

During 1839 and 1840, the liberals gradually gained strength. Federalist revolts of a widespread nature occurred in the departments. Texas was independent, and Yucatán went her own independent way. Gómez Farías, who had fled to New Orleans earlier, now returned to head a liberal uprising in Mexico City. The financial crisis was acute. An annual deficit of at least twelve million pesos was the normal prospect. The press clamored for a return to the Constitution of 1824, a document more responsive to the will of the people than the conservatives' *Siete Leyes*. In an effort to quell rising criticism, many liberals were given government posts. For example, Herrera was removed from *cuartel* and appointed president of the Supreme Military Court. Moves such as this, Bustamante hoped, would keep the army loyal. This judicial appointment lasted from January 1, 1840, for a troublesome two years, until May 9, 1842.[23]

In July, 1840, there were ten days of fighting in the capital. On the 15th, Bustamante was taken prisoner in his quarters by General José Urrea. When news came that Santa Anna was planning to use the confusion to seize dictatorial power, the two parties hastily made a truce to prevent that mutually distasteful occurrence. With this mind, a committee, composed of the Archbishop of Mexico and Generals José Joaquín Herrera, Mariano Michelena, and Bernardo González Angulo, called on President Bustamante on July 22 to discuss the best means of restoring peace and order to the republic.[24]

---

[23] *Expediente de Herrera*, I, Doc. 524.

[24] Bocanegra, ***Memorias de México, 1822–46***, II, 831, Doc. 2; letter of José Urrea to President Bustamante, July 22, 1840, quoted in *Gómez Farías Papers*, Folder No. 3, The University of Texas Archives.

Their efforts bore fruit and for a year factional strife subsided. It is interesting to note that Herrera as a moderate liberal was willing to coöperate with the conservatives to promote the best interests of the nation.

The period of comparative quiet was only a lull before the storm. Not only were the government and its finances in a distressed condition, but the minds of the people were confused. Federalism had been tried and found wanting. Centralism had not been the expected remedy, and conditions, if anything, appeared to be worsened by it. There was some talk of returning Mexico to Spain on the ground that life under the viceroys had been preferable to the existing confusion. Others brought up the old and argumentative subject of inviting a foreign prince to rule the country. One author compared Mexico at this time to unsettled Italy.

> The condition of Mexico at the present day recalls a passage of one of the letters of Jacopo Ortiz, in relation to his own Italy, at the commencement of the present century:
>
> "Italy," says he, "has soldiers, but they are not her defenders; she has friars and monks, who are not priests; she has counts and marquises, but no nobility; and a populace, but not a people." To create this was the mission of the Italian patriots, who failed in driving the strangers from her soil, which the Mexicans have already achieved for themselves. The world has hopes for Italy, which yet writhes beneath the heel of the Austrian; why should it not be hopeful of Mexico, on the soil of which the Spaniard has not stood for twenty years.[25]

Could Mexico work out her own political salvation? The conference between Bustamante and the liberals had been a step forward and a good sign. But modification of the *Siete Leyes* to meet current demands was opposed by the *Poder Conservador*, and little could be done about it. In August, 1841, occurred one of the most unprincipled revolutions against the government. General Paredes, cut from the same cloth as Santa Anna but of lesser talents, pronounced in Jalisco for a new Constitution and a renovation of the executive power. This he proposed to confer on "some citizen worthy of confidence." Of course, he meant Santa Anna, with whom he had a secret understanding.[26] Almost simultaneous pronouncements were made by General Valencia in Mexico and by Santa Anna himself in Vera Cruz. These three finally agreed at Tacubaya on a mutually advantageous plan, supported by several hundred followers. This military coalition decided to bombard the capital, and did so for a week. Bustamante, in a frantic effort to gain support, did a complete about-face and declared for the Constitution of 1824. Failing in this, he withdrew into European exile. On October 7, 1841, Santa

---

[25] Fayette Robinson, *Mexico and Her Military Chieftains*, 195.

[26] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 294.

Anna rode triumphantly into the city behind four white horses to assume once again the supreme power as provisional president.

Meanwhile, events had not gone well for General Herrera. Bustamante, in the midst of plotting and intrigue, was himself suspicious. Apparently he hired spies or detectives to watch the movements of those who might be possible enemies. On February 26, 1841, Herrera wrote to the Minister of War that he was "being watched and followed" and that if there were any thoughts that he was involved in some conspiracy against the government, they were without basis and that he could explain all his actions.[27] A letter from the President, on March 8, assured Herrera that "his loyalty was not doubted."[28] With the return of Santa Anna to dictatorial power, Herrera was still being watched. Santa Anna well knew that his illegal seizure of the government could not be approved by orderly constitutionalists such as Herrera. In fact, Santa Anna ordered General Herrera's arrest and imprisonment in April, 1842.[29] The reason given was that Herrera was guilty of "insubordination against the government."[30] Insubordination apparently consisted of uncovering a misappropriation of some fifteen thousand pesos. The incident probably was revealed through a judicial decision rendered as president of the Supreme Military Court. Santa Anna decided to make a public spectacle of his political prisoner. Herrera was furnished with a military escort to accompany him to the fortress of Perote for imprisonment. En route, to add to his humiliation, he was conspicuously displayed to the public gaze in all towns and villages. Herrera was to be an object lesson to those who dared to criticize the government, which meant, of course, Santa Anna. At last these two men, whose careers had more or less paralleled, but whose characters were so completely antithetical, were to break irreparably a long, superficial friendship.

In order to keep the pay accounts straight, the Minister of War advised the Department of *Hacienda* that General Herrera had been arrested and would be imprisoned in Perote for a three-month period.[31] The unusual nature of the case was shown by the fact that Santa Anna wrote to the military commandant of the prison at

---

[27] *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 707.

[28] *Ibid.*, Doc. 708.

[29] Letter of Commandant-General of Mexico, Juan de Andrade, to Minister of War, dated April 11, 1842, from *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 710. He says that he has arrested General Herrera on that date by order of President Santa Anna.

[30] Letter of President Santa Anna to Military Commander of the Fortress of Perote, April 12, 1842, from *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 714.

[31] Letter of Minister of War to Minister of *Hacienda*, April 11, 1842, in *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 712.

Perote to "prepare a suite for General Herrera as befits his rank."[32] Herrera sent a note to Santa Anna on April 12, in which he asked that he be allowed to stop by his home to arrange some personal matters.[33] After arriving at Perote on the morning of April 17, Herrera wrote a bitter letter to the Minister of War, José M. Tornel, describing his arrest.

> I arrived at the fortress of Perote at eight-thirty this morning. On April 11, I was ordered to report to the Ciudadela for arrest, which I did without asking the cause. I was not even questioned, but those who have seen me think I am a great criminal. After thirty-two years of loyal service I am greatly grieved to see my reputation so injured, since my dearest wish is to leave to my children a good name. However, my conscience is tranquil and I am innocent.[34]

He requested the Minister of War to investigate the origin of this insult and said that he felt sure that the "accusations were made by those who run at the heels of the president, without considering the damage to my family."[35] He added that "until this day I have never sought any command, . . . and I trust that the hand that signed my civil death will be quick to erase the blot which my honor has suffered."[36]

By the end of April, Santa Anna appeared to be satisfied with Herrera's protestations of innocence and loyalty to the government. He wrote to the officer in charge of the prison, ordering Herrera's release on April 30, 1842, and stating that he should be "returned to the capital where he will be employed in a position in keeping with his talents."[37] Herrera was in no mood to serve in Santa Anna's dictatorial government in any capacity after this unjust humiliation. On May 4, he resigned his post as president of the Supreme Military Court and advised the Minister of War that he planned to withdraw from a military career.[38] The same day he informed the president that

> I now consider myself useless and perhaps prejudicial to the public service. . . . I cannot discharge any position with the dignity which it requires. I,

---

[32] Letter of President Santa Anna to the Military Commander of the Fortress of Perote, April 12, 1842, in *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 714. This calls to mind the elaborate quarters furnished Aaron Burr when he was on trial for treason against the United States.

[33] *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 713.

[34] Letter of General Herrera to Minister of War, José M. Tornel, April 17, 1842, *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 716.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 721.

[38] Letter of General Herrera to Minister of War, José M. Tornel, May 4, 1842, *Expediente de Herrera*, II, Doc. 722.

> therefore, renounce all posts, all honors and considerations which I have received from the supreme government.[39]

There was no mistaking the tone of that letter—bitterness, humiliation, and injured pride. Santa Anna might well have taken heed.

Evidently feeling that he had gone too far, Santa Anna ordered the Minister of War to instruct the commandants-general of all departments to publish in an order of the day that "the honor and fame of General of Division, José Joaquín de Herrera, have in no way been tainted by the recent notorious occurrences."[40] For the next ten days reports came in from the various commandants-general from Oaxaca to Coahuila and Texas that this order, completely exonerating Herrera, had been carried out.[41] On May 13, Herrera left Perote for the capital with proper military escort.[42] It must have been gratifying to him to retrace his route of a month previous, but now under such different circumstances and with a guard of honor. He maintained his decision not to accept appointment in spite of Santa Anna's efforts to placate him. His request for *cuartel* status was granted on May 10, 1842; he was to continue in that inactive position until 1844.[43]

Affairs political were not going just the way Provisional President Santa Anna had planned. The Congress which assembled on June 10, 1842, to draw up a new Constitution proved to be dominated by federalists. Santa Anna had hoped for a strong centralist government "with himself as its center."[44] After two attempts to draft a document satisfactory to both Santa Anna and the Congress had failed, Santa Anna again retired from office. This time he left the executive power in the hands of Nicolás Bravo and General Valentín Canalizo with orders that they should alternate the presidency between them. In taking this action, Santa Anna knew that Nicolás Bravo would promote the cause of centralism; nor was he mistaken. Bravo promptly dissolved the Federalist Congress and reconvened the *Junta de Notables,* originally provided by the *Plan de Tacubaya.* This hand-picked body, friendly to Santa Anna, presented the nation on June 13, 1843, with its third Constitution, called the *Bases Orgánicas de la República Mexicana.*

---

[39] Letter of General Herrera to President Santa Anna, May 4, 1842, *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Doc. 723.

[40] Letter of President Santa Anna to Minister of War, José M. Tornel, May 23, 1842, *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Doc. 725.

[41] *Expediente de Herrera,* II, Docs. 726, 727, 728; III, Docs. 178, 182, 183. It is interesting to note that although Texas had been virtually independent for six years, the commandant-general of that area signed his letter as "Commandant General of Coahuila and Texas." *Ibid.,* III, Doc. 183.

[42] *Expediente de Herrera,* III, Doc. 193.

[43] *Ibid.,* I, Doc. 524.

[44] Priestley, *op. cit.,* 294.

What this document created was a constitutional despotism. It provided an even more centralized system than existed under the Constitution of 1836. Civil liberties were a fiction. Every voter was required to have an income of two hundred pesos in order to exercise his franchise. This provision deprived nearly all the lower working classes of the right to vote. The president was given such wide veto powers that the Congress had practically no authority. In a similar manner the courts and the cabinet had little independent voice in the government. Departmental assemblies were dominated by governors, who were presidential appointees. The president had the power to declare war, expel foreigners at his pleasure, and even to issue decrees with the force of law in the departments. This was the nadir of Mexican democracy, brought about by personalistic centralism.

These dictatorial powers were conferred on Santa Anna by virtue of the ensuing elections. He had now travelled the full gamut of party affiliation, from radical liberal to ultra-conservative dictator. The following period was one of graft, *empleomanía,* pomp and ostentation. Santa Anna bent his efforts toward obtaining money. Forced loans were levied against the Church. Import duties were raised twenty per cent. Mining concessions were sold at random to British investors. The additional revenue thus secured was distributed among those who could be the most useful. Thousands of new officers were added to the army, and the number of government employees was greatly increased. A statue of Santa Anna was erected in the plaza with his hand pointing toward Texas, which he vowed he would reconquer. Some observed that his hand was actually pointing toward the mint, not without significance.[45] Santa Anna's amputated leg was transported from its grave in Manga de Clavo and buried with new ceremony in the cathedral of the capital.

Santa Anna's personal action was, in the main, shameless. He identified himself as the "Napoleon of the West" and, like the French dictator, dressed simply, in marked contrast with members of his staff, who appeared in scarlet uniforms. *El Gran Teatro de Santa Anna* was built in Mexico City, and "Napoleon" often attended performances there, sitting in his special box surrounded by a group of generals in full dress uniform. When his wife became fatally ill, a parade of approximately twenty thousand people, led by the archbishop, carried the host to her bedside.[46] In spite of these acts of an imperial potentate, he observed a studied, courteous manner and showed an almost sorrowful facial expression to those admitted to his presence. Also, he occasionally performed acts of kindness and generosity. All in all, he was a most unusual character. In spite of his egotism, duplicity, and misguided patriotism, he was an undisputed leader of men, gifted with enormous persuasive eloquence. He was not lacking a type of feudal bravery and chivalry. Had his talents been otherwise directed, he could have been a blessing rather than the scourge of Mexico.

---

[45] Parkes, *op. cit.,* 209.

[46] *Ibid.* A month later, he was married to a young girl of fifteen without her family's consent.

In early 1843, General Herrera, still in *cuartel* status, was assigned limited duty with the eleventh infantry regiment stationed in the capital.[47] This unit, of course, was not on active duty. Santa Anna tried once more to win Herrera's confidence by awarding him the diploma of the "Cross of Constancy" first class for long and meritorious service.[48] Over a week later, on November 7, Herrera briefly acknowledged the award. During early 1844, Herrera continued with the eleventh regiment in Mexico City while clamorous opposition to Santa Anna's highhandedness and peculation grew daily more powerful.

Priestley evaluates the Santa Anna despotism as follows:

> Under a benevolent despot, the system evolved by Santa Anna might have worked. But his purpose had been entirely selfish. Thoroughly ensconced in the power by election in 1844, he began to rule with the most barefaced corruptness. He and his entourage were guilty of the most open immorality. Graft lost all vestiges of refinement. Huge sums expended in pleasures led to demands upon the people for still greater sums to be expended, it was alleged, upon preparations for resistance to the United States, France, and England, whose interests in the outcome of the Texan situation were matters of grave concern to the presidential power.[49]

Sensing the rising tide of opposition against him, Santa Anna monotonously withdrew from the presidency in favor of General Canalizo, who devotedly but blindly followed the dictator's every wish. Santa Anna took the precaution of leaving a large body of troops between Manga de Clavo and the capital in case he should need them. One thing he had overlooked; he had not rewarded General Paredes for his support of the *Plan de Tacubaya*. Paredes had been made commandant-general of the Department of Jalisco, but this did not satisfy his ambition. In Congress, such liberals as Gómez Pedraza, Llaca, Olaguíbel, de la Rosa, and others openly denounced Santa Anna's failure to observe the limits of his constitutional power as laid down in the Organic Bases. There was also widespread dissatisfaction with the heavy burden of taxation imposed on all classes of society.

---

[47] *Expediente de Herrera*, III, Doc. 157. Orders dated January 19, 1843, signed by José M. Tornel, Minister of War.

[48] *Expediente de Herrera*, III, Doc. 149. Decree dated October 28, 1843.

[49] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 296.

In November, General Paredes proclaimed against interim President Canalizo.[50] He demanded that the government grant the departments more local autonomy and that forced loans be discontinued. At the same time Paredes demanded a return to the original *Plan de Tacubaya.* Five of the northern departments immediately supported his *pronunciamiento.* To meet the situation, Canalizo appointed Santa Anna as commander-in-chief of the army to defend his own interests, but the Chamber of Deputies refused to give their consent to this unconstitutional proceeding.[51] Unimpressed, Santa Anna took the field against his enemies. He advanced on Querétaro, where he found a very cool departmental assembly. In retaliation, he threatened the whole body with imprisonment in Perote" if they did not accede to his wishes.[52] The assembly would not be intimidated and refused to subordinate itself.

In the capital, Canalizo found the going difficult. Congress began its attack on the executive by moving to impeach the Minister of War for allowing Santa Anna's appointment as commander-in-chief of the army while being the elected president. The Minister defended himself by saying that Santa Anna was not "acting" president; therefore, he could be given command in the army. This statement drew hoots and cat-calls from the Congressional gallery. The bedlam became so uncontrollable that Congress had to continue its discussions in secret session.[53] Canalizo then threw all pretense of constitutionalism aside, locked the doors of the Hall of Sessions, and, by a decree of November 29, dissolved both chambers of Congress.[54] He also declared that Santa Anna was constitutional president and that he was *ad interim* president. Another supplementary decree was issued on December 2, ordering all employees and government officials to take an oath of obedience to the administration and the decree of November 29. On the same day, the Chamber of Deputies passed a vote of censure against the administration, and against Santa Anna and Canalizo in particular.[55] The Supreme Court upheld the views of Congress and the Organic Bases against dictatorship.[56]

---

[50] The newspaper, *Diario del Gobierno,* for November 9, 1844, reported Paredes' revolt in Jalisco, characterizing it as "foolish."

[51] Vicente Riva Palacio, *México á través de los siglos,* IV, 526. Objection raised on November 12, 1844, in the Chamber.

[52] *Ibid.,* 527. He gave the assembly twenty-four hours to withdraw its pronouncement against him.

[53] Callcott, *Santa Anna,* 206–207.

[54] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.,* IV, 528.

Time and public opinion were running out for Santa Anna. The entire nation was in a confused uproar of righteous indignation over the dictator's attack on the Constitution, the Congress, the departments, and civil rights generally. On December 4, part of the troops in the capital declared for the Congress and constitutionalism. Thousands of people collected in the *zócalo* in front of the National Palace. The mob placed a large fool's cap on the statue of Santa Anna and a hangman's noose around its neck.[57] Canalizo then ordered the remainder of the troops, whom he thought loyal, to march against Paredes, but they refused. This was the breaking point. Long pent up emotions gave way, and for several days there was rioting in the streets of the capital. The *léperos* cast lots for the honor of tearing down the statue of the dictator.[58] His oft-disinterred leg was dug up and trailed on a string through the streets. The Santa Anna Theater was entered and badly damaged. The authorities finally changed its name to National Theater to prevent further destruction. The whole scene took on the aspect of a riotous national holiday.

What part had General Herrera taken in these momentous events? In early 1844, he had been chosen president of the Council of State to give an atmosphere of legality to an otherwise tyrannical régime.[59] When Santa Anna had resigned the presidency in September in favor of Canalizo, General Herrera had automatically become substitute president during the few days required for General Canalizo to arrive in the capital to take office.[60] This was in accordance with Article 106 of the Organic Bases which provided for the succession of the president of the Council to the presidency under such circumstances. Herrera returned to his original post when Canalizo assumed the executive power. As the situation became more critical, Herrera watched and waited. Had he been a vindictive man, he would have rejoiced over the misfortunes of Santa Anna. Instead, he remained critically loyal to the government until Canalizo issued the arbitrary and unconstitutional decrees of November 29 and December 2, which destroyed the legislative power. After two days of rioting in the capital, a group of generals and chiefs of the army, both conservatives and liberals, met in the Convent of San Francisco to discuss ways and means of restoring order and constitutional government. The leader of this group was General José Joaquín de Herrera.[61] On December 6, 1844, a day memorable in the annals of liberty-loving Mexicans, this group headed by Herrera issued a manifesto "proclaiming the restoration of constitutional government and the reëstablishment of the National Congress."[62] The proclamation was received by the people with applause and tears of rejoicing. The decree did not encourage the use of violence and bloodshed to accomplish this return to law and order but called on the nation to abide no longer the tyrannies of dictatorship by insisting that the fundamental law be observed. The movement gained spontaneous and widespread support. Though led by military men, the revolution was political and social rather than military in nature. It was a people's revolution against tyranny, accomplished with little bloodshed and was the most universal and spontaneous uprising of popular opinion since 1821.

---

[55] Callcott, *op. cit.*, 207. The vote was 45 to 10 in favor of the motion. Nine of the dissenters later approved. The Senate joined in this formal criticism.

[56] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, 528–529.

[57] Callcott, *op. cit.*, 207. The Baronesa de Wilson in her *México y sus gobernantes*, II, 119, states that "a white hood" covered the head of the statue.

[58] Parkes, *op. cit.*, 209.

[59] M. A. Peral, *Diccionario biográfico mexicano*, 385.

[60] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 610, 633. On September 12, 1844, at three o'clock in the afternoon, Santa Anna turned over the government to General Herrera, President of the Council of State.

"El Sr. Herrera debía desempeñar la presidencia mientras llegaba a la capital el Sr. Canalizo, que estaba en San Luis en marcha para hacerse cargo del ejército del Norte."—*Ibid.*, 633. Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 271: ". . . fué presidente del Consejo en 1844 y de la República por diez días sustituyendo al general Canalizo."

The Congress was reconvened on the same day that General Herrera issued the manifesto. The members, carried on the shoulders of an ebullient populace, met in the afternoon of December 6 in the Convent of San Francisco. At four o'clock in the afternoon Herrera went to the National Palace and an hour later was joined by the Chambers.[63] The following day, the Senate elected General Herrera interim president of the Mexican Republic by a vote of thirty-eight to one.[64] The results of the election were announced on December 10, amid salvos of artillery and much waving of the national flag. General Herrera, "impelled by his genial modesty," had first refused to accept the presidency, but this the Congress would not admit.[65] The new president appointed a cabinet of moderates from both parties. The post of Foreign Relations was filled by Luis G. Cuevas, an important position in the light of critical diplomatic relations with the United States. Mariano Riva Palacio took the portfolio of Justice. The thankless task of Minister of Finance went to Pedro Echeverría, while General Pedro García Conde, who had given Herrera valuable support in the meeting at San Francisco, was appointed Minister of War.[66]

---

[61] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 647–648; Guillermo Prieto, *Memorias de mis tiempos*, 164.

[62] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.*, 648; Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, IV, 769.

[63] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 276.

"En efecto, á poco rato se reunió en el citado convento el congreso, á las cuatro de la tarde pasó el Sr. Herrera á palacio y una despues lo hizo la representación nacional." Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 648; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 273.

[64] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 648. The one vote was cast for Sr. Manuel Rincón.

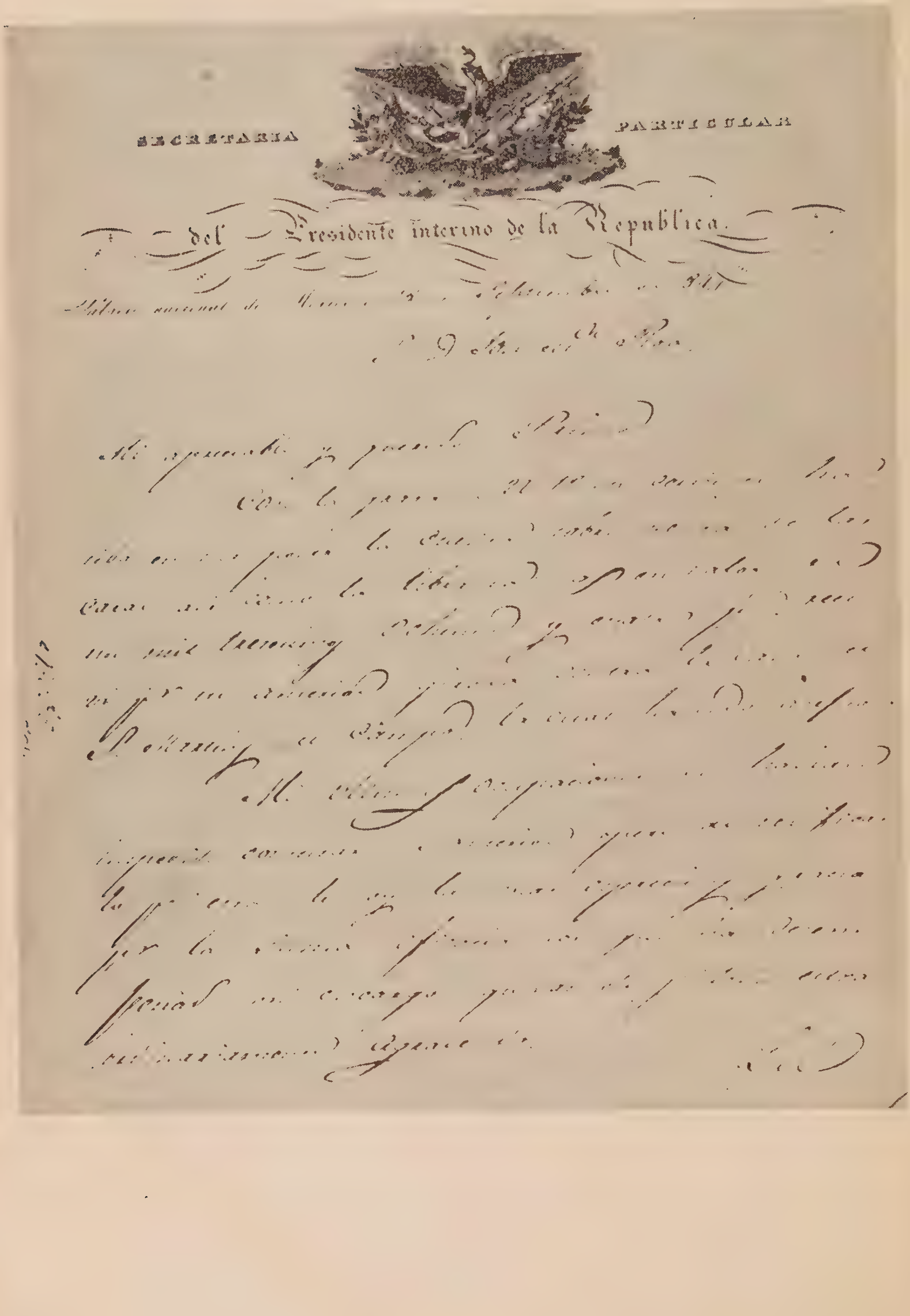
Mexico now presented the extraordinary picture of having a moderate liberal president but an ultra-conservative constitution, the Organic Bases, which was still in effect. Herrera did not propose to scrap this document arbitrarily but to operate under it until the departmental assemblies had expressed the popular desire in regard to whether a federalist or centralist form of government should be adopted. Although the structure of centralism was to continue for two more years, owing to unsettled conditions brought on by the war with the United States, the Herrera administration was more liberal than reactionary. Canalizo was imprisoned, and charges brought against him. The Chamber of Deputies formally proclaimed the deposition of Santa Anna on the 17th of December. Now the shoe was on the other foot. From political oblivion and imprisonment, Herrera had risen to the presidency. From supreme dictatorship, Santa Anna had been declared outside the law, a fugitive from justice. Such was the unpredictable course of Mexican politics and fickle fortune.

---

[65] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México,* II, 276.

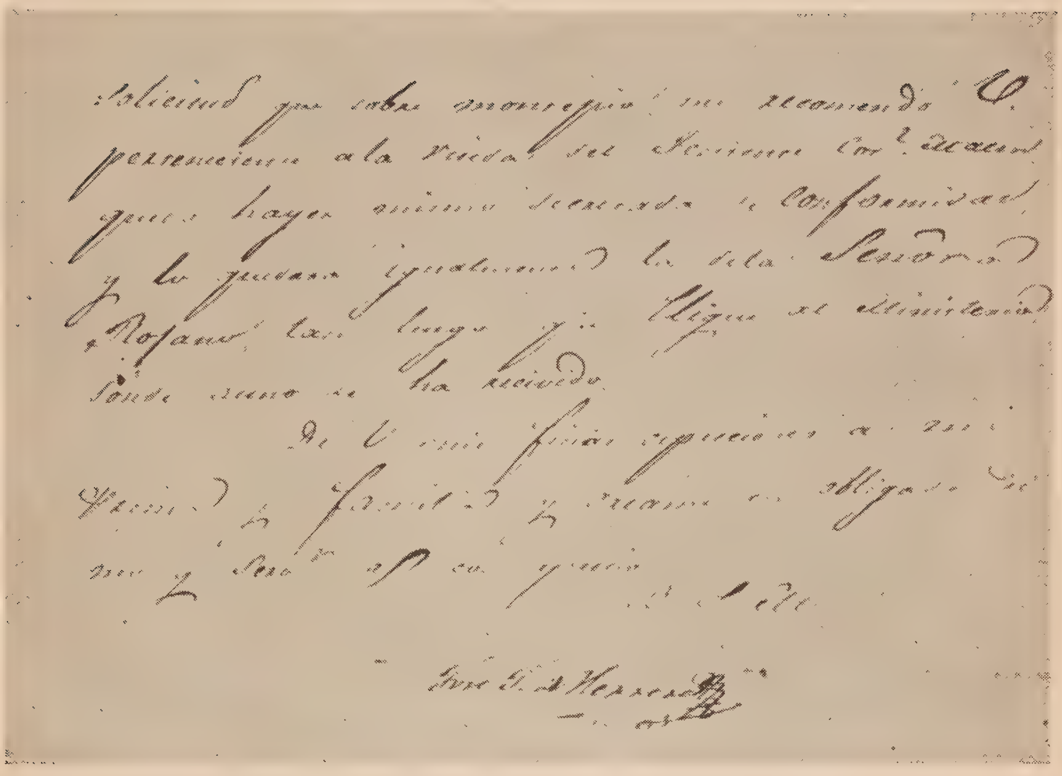
"El General Herrera, impelido por su modestia genial presentó la renuncia que no le fué admitida, y habiéndole nombrado Presidente el Senado casi por unanimidad, pues tan solo discrepo un voto, se anunció la elección el día 10 del mismo Diciembre con salvas y bando nacional."

[66] A letter of President Herrera to his cousin, Don José María Roa, is included on the following page to show the president's signature. The first paragraph is concerned with money matters while the second deals with Herrera's efforts to secure the *montepío* pension for the widow of an army veteran.



SECRETARIA PARTICULAR

del Presidente interino de la Republica.



José J. de Herrera

CHAPTER VI

The First Administration of President José Joaquín de Herrera, 1844–1845

President Herrera had been swept into office on a wave of popular acclaim and by the votes of a grateful Congress. His selection as interim president of the republic by the almost unanimous vote of the Senate on December 7, 1844, did not, however, remove the threat of Santa Anna with twelve thousand troops at Querétaro nor, as yet, indicate the course that Paredes would follow with his army at Guadalajara. Favorable reports, however, did continue to come in from the various departments and garrisons adhering to the Herrera government. The Mexican historian Zamacois stated:

> D. José Joaquín de Herrera enjoyed a fine reputation in all classes of society, and the people were pleased to see him take over the position of first rank in the Nation. He was a man in whom were found honesty, modesty, good judgment and common sense.[1]

Previous experience told Herrera that Santa Anna would not give up the presidency without a struggle. Herrera decided that since the only law recognized by Santa Anna was that of force, he would have to raise troops superior in numbers to those commanded by the ex-dictator. Bodies of civilian militia were formed throughout the land with the title of *Voluntarios Defensores de las Leyes*.[2] The people seemed to try to outdo each other in manifesting their willingness to defend the capital, which no one doubted would soon be attacked. The departmental assembly of the State of Mexico authorized the governor to raise four thousand men in three days to protect the city.[3] Generals Nicolás Bravo, Juan Álvarez, and Manuel Romero were ordered to come to the capital to augment its defenses. Bravo was made *jefe* of the army, with General Gabriel Valencia second in command. The city was placed in a state of siege, with "pieces of artillery mounted on the flat roofs of houses, and trenches dug in the streets."[4] In the capital, the leading merchants, business men, and civic leaders met together and declared their support of the Herrera administration. A regiment of wealthy young men was organized as a part of the Defenders of the Laws for the Federal District; it was under the command of General García Conde with headquarters in the Convent of San Agustín, now the National Library. Another such group, called the *Legión Sagrada,* was formed at the Convent of Espíritu Santo under General Juan Pablo Anaya. The departments of Vera Cruz, Puebla, and Oaxaca were placed on a war basis, since therein lay Santa Anna's chief strength and through them he might try to escape the country.[5] The capital was ready, even to the flooding of the lands surrounding the city. Santa Anna would have no easy time of it there.

---

[1] Niceto de Zamacois, *Historia de México*, III, 362.

[2] *Ibid.*, 363. "No sooner was this law passed, than in all parts of the Republic were formed groups of common people, skilled in the handling of the horse and spear, ready to fight the enemy." Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 276.

[3] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 276.

[4] Baronesa de Wilson, *México y sus gobernantes*, II, 121.

Canalizo and Basadre, a member of Santa Anna's cabinet, had been captured and imprisoned. Haro y Tamaríz, former Minister of Finance, escaped to join Santa Anna in Querétaro. By December 9, Santa Anna had received word of events in Mexico City. He held a *junta de guerra* with his generals to decide on the best plan of procedure. The consensus was to discontinue the march against General Paredes in Guadalajara and to attack the capital immediately. Santa Anna then set up a government of his own to give a semblance of legality to his acts. He dispatched a force to Guanajuato which seized the money in the local mint, totaling some 135,000 duros.[6] Haro y Tamaríz was sent to San Juan de los Lagos to collect the proceeds of the fair held on December 16, which amounted to another 50,000 duros. Forced loans were levied to add more revenue to facilitate the machinations of the dictator. He was no doubt relieved to hear that his arch enemy in the Chamber of Deputies, Llaca, from Querétaro, had died on December 16, but only after charging Santa Anna with treason for dissolving the departmental assembly in that city and imprisoning its officials.

The Chamber of Deputies issued a decree on December 17 which stated that the provisional government set up by Santa Anna in Querétaro was without legal basis and that all its acts would be considered null and void. Any troops supporting Santa Anna were to be charged with treason against the Herrera government.[7] Santa Anna first tried persuasion to try to convince President Herrera to relinquish the executive power to him.

---

[5] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.,* II, 276–277.

[6] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XII, 367. Some of the money was used for the military campaign, some was distributed to adherents, but most of it eventually was returned to the wealthy and influential people to whom it belonged to secure their support. The Conde de Pérez Gálvez received 90,000 duros of the money which belonged to him.

[7] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* 368–369.

> I regret extremely that you have so far forgotten what is due to our old friendship, our pleasant relations, and what I think I am entitled to as first magistrate of the Republic, as not to have thought fit to write me to give information of the events which have placed you for the time being at the head of the administration. I do not know what to think of this silence on your part, although indeed I seem to see in it a kind of hostility towards me personally which I do not think I deserve in any view of the case. . . .[8]

This attempt to confuse the issue went unanswered, and Santa Anna continued his preparations to advance on the capital.

Feeling ran high in many places against the dictator. In Vera Cruz, a mob gathered in front of the government building and demanded a picture of Santa Anna. When it was obtained, it was "publicly outraged and burned in the plaza."[9] Similar scenes were enacted in Oaxaca, Morelia, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí and Guanajuato. Broadsides appeared in the streets of Mexico City, with headlines such as "General Santa Anna's High Treason." Some of them gave the secret provisions of his treaty with the Texans and his farewell speech to them on June 1, 1836. Another was headed "The Crimes of the Tyrant Are Demanding His Head."[10] He was attacked in prose and poetry, on the stage and in the street. Even old forgery charges of 1813 were resurrected by the daily newspapers. In short,

> every political act for which the Dictator had once been praised was now classed as treason to some special faction: first, he had been a traitor to Spain; second, a traitor to Iturbide; third, a traitor to the triumvirate; fourth, a traitor to the federation in 1828; fifth, a traitor to the legitimate government in 1832; sixth, a traitor to the federal system in 1835; seventh, a traitor in 1842 to the second constitution; and finally a traitor to Congress and the Constitution in 1844.[11]

Santa Anna was not yet aware of the extent to which the nation had become aroused. Before leaving Querétaro, he endeavored to leave a friendly government behind him by releasing the officials from jail and reconvening the assembly. No sooner had he departed than that body declared against him and proposed to resume its powers that had been "illegally interrupted."[12] When an attempt to win over General Cortazar by offering to make him Minister of War had failed, Santa Anna dishonorably tricked him into capture. He also sent a deputation, with Haro y Tamaríz at its head, to make propositions to President Herrera in a last attempt to win his support. When the people discovered the former minister in the city, they stoned his carriage.[13] Again Santa Anna's overtures were refused by Herrera. Upon approaching the city and seeing the strength of its defenses and the resoluteness of its defenders, Santa Anna wavered. Uncertainty was replaced by fear when General Bravo, amid much rejoicing of the residents, arrived in the capital with his forces on December 22.

---

[8] George L. Rives, *The United States and Mexico*, I, 675. The whole tone of the letter was one of injured innocence. Apparently he had forgotten his unjust imprisonment of Herrera in 1842.

[9] Callcott, *op. cit.*, 209.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Anonymous, *Biografía del Gral. Santa Anna*, 25–26, quoted in Callcott, *op. cit.*, 210.

[12] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, 370.

> On December 22, Don Nicolás Bravo arrived, to be received by a great throng of people. The streets were adorned with garlands of flowers, and the balconies were covered with beautiful flags. Santa Anna, upon seeing the imposing energy which Mexico presented, feared to lead an attack upon the city.[14]

In an effort to offset the strategic advantage of the defenders, Santa Anna challenged President Herrera to meet him with his army in a pitched battle outside the city in the fields of Aragón. This, he cunningly said, would spare the capital, save many lives, and settle the political issue once and for all. The ridiculous proposal received no reply other than the "laughter of the townspeople."[15] Santa Anna then threatened to take the city by storm, declaring that he would not be responsible for the consequences. President Herrera replied by ordering him to give up his command to the captured Cortazar and to surrender himself to face charges of treason before a grand jury. This Santa Anna refused to do, but it was now perfectly clear that the Herrera government was neither to be intimidated nor seduced.

Discretion seemed to be the better part of valor; therefore, Santa Anna determined to march against Puebla rather than try to take the strongly fortified and determined capital. The proclamations of Paredes in Guadalajara and of General Arista in the northern provinces in support of President Herrera made the situation critical for Santa Anna. Paredes was requested to come with all haste to the relief of Puebla, which Santa Anna began to besiege on January 3, 1845.[16] Meanwhile, Santa Anna tried persuasion, bribery, and threats to induce the commander of Puebla, General Ignacio Inclán, to surrender the city and join his banner. He sent a note to General Inclán stating that he was

---

[13] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México,* II, 277–278.

[14] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* 373.

[15] *Ibid.* Santa Anna must have thought the defenders gullible to have made such a proposal.

[16] Letter of President Herrera to General Paredes, dated Jan. 1, 1845, from the *Paredes y Arrillaga Papers,* Folder 2, University of Texas Archives. Herrera requests Paredes to march against Santa Anna at Puebla.

> at the gates of the city at the head of twelve thousand men, and that he foresaw no difficulty which could prevent the entrance of the army under his command.[17]

Inclán and the people of Puebla remained loyal to Herrera and to constitutional order and refused to accede to his demands. Santa Anna then ordered a direct attack on the city and, after several days' fighting, managed to invest several of the suburban districts. On January 6, Paredes arrived in Mexico City and the next day, with the applause of the capital ringing in his ears, he departed with his forces for Puebla. General Bravo had marched for Puebla at about the same time. News of the impending attack by these two advancing columns caused Santa Anna to give up the siege of Puebla, free General Cortazar, and evacuate the points of the city which he had taken.[18]

Santa Anna now saw the handwriting on the wall. He again sent Haro y Tamaríz—granted a safe conduct by Bravo—to President Herrera to request that he

> be allowed to renounce the presidency, that he be permitted to leave Mexico to live in a foreign country, and that not only should he receive his full salary but that his statue, pictures, and other tokens of former victories be restored to their places.[19]

As might have been expected, this egotistical request was refused by Herrera. Santa Anna then resigned himself to his fate. He hypocritically advised his troops to adhere to the administration, and, with a few mounted escorts, tried to make his way to the coast.[20]

When he arrived at the outskirts of Jalapa, he asked General Rincón for permission to pass through the city to Vera Cruz for embarkation for some foreign land. Rincón refused and determined to try to catch the fugitive. Disheartened, Santa Anna separated from his large escort and planned to slip through the mountainous country with three attendants. He disguised himself as a muleteer and started on his journey around the towering mountain, *Cofre de Perote,* and down the steep plateau south of Jalapa, using the infrequently-travelled mountain trails. Near the small village of Jico, Santa Anna was discovered and taken prisoner by some native Indians who were highly pleased with their prize when they learned that they had captured "El Gordo," the hated owner of Manga de Clavo.[21] Native humor found expression in their plan to boil Santa Anna in banana leaves and present him as a huge tamale to the authorities. The intervention of the village priest was the only thing that saved his life. He was then ignominously bounced along in a cart to Jalapa where, with much ceremony, he was turned over to the local officials. President Herrera ordered Santa Anna's imprisonment in the fortress of Perote while his case was being considered.

---

[17] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, 375.

[18] *Ibid.*, 377. General Inclán, the governor, and the heroic defenders of Puebla were signally honored by the government for their loyal resistance. Medals were struck off in their honor.

[19] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, 378; Callcott, *op. cit.*, 210.

[20] Before taking leave of his troops, he could not resist one last speech of self-pity. "Companions in arms! With pride I sustained the loss of an important member of my body, lost gloriously in the service of our Native Land, as some of you bore witness; but that pride has been turned to grief, sadness and desperation. You should know that those mortal remains have been violently torn from the funeral urn, which was broken, and dragged through the public streets to make sport of them. I know your astonishment and that you will be ashamed; you are right, such excesses were unknown among us. My friends, I am going to leave, obeying destiny. There in foreign lands I shall remember you. May you always be the support and ornament of your nation. God be with you."—Callcott, *op. cit.*, 211, quoted from Santa Anna, *Memoirs*, 55.

A few years earlier, Santa Anna and his cabinet might have expected the same fate of Iturbide and Guerrero, but President Herrera was generous to his enemies and was opposed to undue severity in the punishment of political crimes. There was no doubt that these men were guilty of subverting the constitution, if not of outright treason to the republic. After much long and heated discussion, Santa Anna was banished from Mexico "forever," and Canalizo and Basadre were exiled for a period of ten years.[22] On June 1, 1845, Santa Anna and his family sailed from Vera Cruz for Havana, supposedly en route for Venezuela. He remained in Havana until the war with the United States presented an opportunity to reënter Mexico. This generous treatment of Santa Anna and his cohorts may have been ill-advised but was largely due to President Herrera's mercy and high moral standards. Professor Priestley attributes this leniency to the fact that

> a spirit of somewhat greater political tolerance was growing up in the country among the liberals led by such men as Gómez Farías and Herrera, the moderate president.[23]

Shortly after Santa Anna had been taken prisoner, President Herrera issued a general amnesty to all except the dictator and his immediate associates.[24] Ten days after his capture, a festival to the Virgin of Guadalupe was declared on January 26, when Masses of thanksgiving were said in the cathedral for the return of freedom and constitutional government. President Herrera and his cabinet attended the ceremony. Their simplicity of dress and the complete absence of all ostentation was a marked contrast to the fanfare of the preceding régime.[25] Many of the prisoners convicted of minor offenses were pardoned for having worked on the fortifications of the capital to prepare it against enemy attack. More serious offenders had their sentences reduced.[26] With the final overthrow of Santa Anna, and in view of the momentary unity within the republic, it appeared that an era of peace and progressive development might be realized under the new president's prudent, moderate-liberal leadership.

---

[21] Callcott, *op. cit.*, 212. "El Gordo" means "the fat one."

[22] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, 382–383. Others were exiled for varying periods. Minister Reyes was captured and exiled for ten years while Minister Rejon managed to elude capture and sailed for Europe in an English packet.

[23] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 298.

[24] Ignacio Àlvarez, ***Estudios sobre la historia general de México***, V, 264. Decree of May 24, 1845, passed by Congress.

Both houses of Congress had assembled in joint session on December 15, 1844, to witness the taking of the oath by the new president. To them, Herrera pledged that he

> would comply with and see to it that others complied with the Organic Bases . . . and would do everything possible to promote the welfare and prosperity of the Nation.[27]

He stated that he hoped to make himself the "nucleus, expressive of the wishes and will of all parties and all opinions," in order that Mexico might have a responsive and responsible government.[28] He added that

> each and every Mexican feels a mark of shame on his forehead and a desire in his heart to erase the indignities wrought [by the Santa Anna administration] against the public confidence. . . . When it was felt that the hour of salvation was at hand and when it was represented to me that my reputation for constitutionalism was needed to complete this great work, I did not hesitate, nor will I hesitate, when the Nation has need of my services. . . . Supported by the people and the soldiery, aided by all classes of society, by all and with all, I proclaimed the reëstablishment of the fundamental law, opened the doors of the sanctuary of the laws which a sacriligious hand had closed, reëstablished the legal authorities, and, permit me to say, gentlemen, this splendid triumph of the Nation gives me great joy, an indefinable joy comparable only to that which I felt on that day of universal good fortune, September 27, 1821.[29]

---

[25] The proceeds of the festival were given to the injured, homeless, and bereaved of Puebla. Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 676.

[26] *Ibid.*, 687; *El Monitor Constitucional*, March 23, 1845.

[27] "El General D. José Joaquín de Herrera, al jurar como interino en 15 de Diciembre de 1844," quoted in *Informas y manifiestos de los poderes executivo y legislativo de 1821 á 1904*, I, 282. Found in the Biblioteca de Historia de Hacienda in Mexico City.

[28] *Ibid.*, 283.

[29] *Ibid.*, 283–284. On September 27, 1821, Herrera entered Mexico City with the first Mexican troops as the Spanish evacuated the capital.

With reference to foreign policy, the president said that it was his purpose "to preserve and reëstablish the most friendly and cordial relations" with all nations. He pledged that Mexico's rights and legitimate interests would be upheld and defended, "persuaded as I am that justice is the best policy." Herrera commented that he felt that the recent successful overthrow of tyranny would promote the respect and friendly attitude of civilized nations for Mexico throughout the world, nations which "in the past had believed Mexico incapable of sustaining liberal institutions."

In domestic affairs, President Herrera called on all Mexicans to have

> a profound respect for the fundamental law, coöperate with each other, and sacrifice personal opinions in order that the social guarantees provided by these laws might be secured.[30]

In keeping with laws on those subjects, which prohibited slanderous and seditious statements, freedom of speech and of the press were to prevail. Herrera also promised an immediate attack on the complicated problems of finance and outlined a plan of economy in government and an equitable distribution of the funds at the government's disposal. He deplored previous scandalous seizures of public funds by unscrupulous individuals and politicians. In regard to the army, he spoke of needed reforms.

> The army will be what it ought to be in countries which profess liberal principles: the sustainer of the laws, the defender of the rights of the people which are its rights as well.[31]

He proposed to make the army the dependable support of the Constitution rather than the pawn of politicians to effect its overthrow. The president closed his initial speech to Congress by stating that if the program he had sketched in general outline were carried out, Mexico could look forward to a period of peace and development which would redound to the "power and glory of the republic."[32]

From this speech one sees that at least four main problems confronted the Herrera administration: (1) the reorganization of the financial structure; (2) the reduction in size and reorganization of the army; (3) constitutional reform; and (4) the conclusion of a satisfactory agreement with Texas and the United States concerning the status of Texas, and the satisfaction of claims of

---

[30] "El General D. José Joaquín de Herrera, al jurar como interino en 15 de Diciembre de 1844," quoted in *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 284.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] *Ibid.*

American citizens against Mexico.[33] The successful solution of the first three problems was to be conditioned and delayed by the unfortunate events in connection with the last of these issues.

Financial conditions were at their worst, thanks to the inheritance from the preceding wasteful régime. Santa Anna had created twelve thousand new civil and military positions and had obtained several loans at ruinous rates of interest. Herrera reduced expenses of administration to a minimum and weeded out thousands of incompetent civil employees.

Several ministers of finance tried their hand at coping with the foreign and internal debt problem. Their efforts were of little avail, due to the lack of adequate national income and to the added expenses of defense preparations for possible war with the United States. Army reforms progressed along lines previously laid down by Herrera when he had been Minister of War in 1833 and 1834. Hundreds of officers commissioned by Santa Anna were removed from command, but here again the necessity of raising additional troops during the summer of 1845, in the face of threatening war with the United States, prevented the fruition of these plans.

In regard to constitutional reform, Herrera preferred a federalist republic and a new liberal constitution, but he did not propose to abolish the Organic Bases by arbitrary or highhanded methods. He was sincere in his pledge to support this fundamental law until it could be legally modified and the departmental assemblies could vote on the issue of federalism or centralism. Democratic processes must be observed, and he felt that the only constitutional course of action would be to leave the decision to the popular will as expressed by the departmental assemblies. This all took time—much time—and, meanwhile, the course of the administration in regard to the question of Texas caused widespread political dissension which, in turn, delayed the changing of the constitution. The Baronesa de Wilson has made this rather unfair appraisal of President Herrera's policy concerning constitutional reform:

> . . . in his zeal for the welfare of the Republic, he [Herrera] vacillated between two roads for the administrative system. Should the Republic be Federal or Central?[34]

Herrera did not vacillate between the two forms; he, personally, favored the federal plan. However, he had been raised to power by a combination of all parties and by a general demand to return to constitutional government. The Organic Bases comprised the Constitution. The only logical and legal way to change the system under which Mexico found herself was by the method proposed by the president. This attitude did not indicate indecision or weakness but good judgment and a desire to follow legal processes, virtues that Mexicans sometimes found difficult to recognize.

---

[33] The question of claims had also been inherited from preceding régimes. There were large unsatisfied claims of many American citizens for forced loans and loss of property and life in disorders resulting from the many Mexican "revolutions." A convention for the adjudication of these claims awarded some two million dollars to American claimants in 1843. After making three payments to the United States, Mexico had defaulted on her obligations.

[34] Baronesa de Wilson, *op. cit.*, II, 122.

Aside from its importance in the field of foreign relations, the Texas question greatly influenced Mexican internal problems. It is necessary, therefore, to indicate Herrera's attitude concerning Texas in order to understand concurrent political events within Mexico.

Once again, Herrera inherited this problem from Santa Anna. It was Santa Anna's overthrow in 1834 of the Constitution of 1824 and its liberal principles that brought about the rebellion of Texas. It was Santa Anna's lack of watchfulness on the afternoon of April 21, 1836, during the siesta hour, that led to his surprise and defeat by a numerically inferior force of Texans under Sam Houston. Since that date, Texas had been virtually independent, but Santa Anna had kept the issue alive by erecting a statue of himself significantly pointing toward the former province which he declared he would reconquer. He had continually kept the people stirred up over the prospect of reconquest and had demanded loans for that express purpose. It was also his administration which had declared that annexation of Texas by the United States would result in the breaking off of diplomatic relations and would be considered as a *casus belli.* On the other hand, President Herrera considered Texas irreparably lost to Mexico, who was militarily unable to force her return to the Mexican Union. He favored recognition of Texas independence with the stipulation that she not join with the United States. In this way, a buffer state would be provided between Mexico and her powerful northern neighbor. At no time did he advocate war with the United States to uphold alleged Mexican prerogatives and rights in regard to Texas. He always advised peaceful negotiation and conciliation as the basis of settlement. His tenacious efforts to hold Mexico to this wise course of action brought him many enemies, much undeserved criticism, and, finally, a military revolt that caused him to resign the presidency.

But all this was to develop later during the course of Herrera's administration. Actually, his term began with an era of good feeling. All parties and groups were hopeful, and the people were joyous. On January 1, 1845, the entire foreign diplomatic corps congratulated the new president and offered their support.[35] Congress formally passed a vote of thanks to the new president. Governors and departmental assemblies expressed their desire to support the national government. Kings and presidents of foreign nations sent congratulatory letters to President Herrera. Even the exiled Bustamante wrote from Paris in praise of the president and the new administration. He stated that the time "is ripe to compose party differences" and that "all must work together for the welfare of the Republic."[36] A personal incident of some interest which occurred a few days after Herrera had taken office further added to his popularity with the common people. Minister of Justice Mariano Riva Palacio, who was also temporarily in charge of *Hacienda,* told this story. One morning Riva Palacio came to see President Herrera in his quarters. He found the president eating a frugal meal and using pottery dishes and knife, fork, and spoon of iron. He was sitting at a crude table and serving himself. The minister was aghast to see the President of the republic living in such ordinary circumstances. He proposed to advance Herrera fifty or one hundred pesos from the funds under his control in order that the President might live in the manner befitting his position. Herrera replied:

> Not so long ago I pawned one of my last jewels in the Monte de Piedad to meet the expenses of the inauguration ceremonies, and as yet I have not spent all the money. Attend, Señor Minister, to the more urgent expenses of government and forget about me for the present.[37]

Although this story of personal disinterest endeared Herrera to the people, there were some snobbish individuals who criticized him for miserliness and said that he lacked a sense of the dignity of his office.

On January 1, 1845, President Herrera addressed the Congress at the opening of its session. He gave an honest appraisal of the condition of the government. In warning he said: "We should not try to fool ourselves; the administrative system is truly chaotic."[38]

---

[35] Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," p. 35, in his *Historia genealógica,* II. Herrera's efforts to conciliate party differences were indicated by his approval of seating both Gómez Farías and Sr. Trigueros, representatives of the widest separation of party opinion, in the Congress. This policy also drew criticism. *Ibid.*, 39.

[36] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* III, 689. Bustamante was allowed to return from exile.

[37] Baronesa de Wilson, *op. cit.*, II, 122; Ricardo Ortega, *op. cit.*, II, 35; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México,* II, 277; Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XII, 387.

[38] "El General José Joaquín Herrera, al abrir las sesiones del primer periodo, en 1 de Enero de 1845," quoted in *Informes y manifiestos,* I, 291.

Herrera pointed out that the only solid basis of administration at present was the Organic Bases, however inadequate they might be. Gradual and prudent reform of this document was advised while the basic question of centralism or federalism was being considered by the various departmental assemblies. He called on Congress to devise ways and means of increasing the national revenue and to formulate a sound financial program for reducing the debt. The president called attention to the fact that one of the chief reasons that some generals had rebelled against the government in the past was that officers belonging to the party in power had usually been paid while others had not. Equal treatment, he said, must be observed with no thought of party distinction. Promotions were to be based on merit rather than on personalities. A new spirit needed to be aroused in the army so that the "officer will have incentive and the soldier will have some hope for the future in his career."[39]

In regard to foreign policy, and particularly referring to Texas, he stated that the course his administration would follow would be based on "respect for mutual rights." His first official statement on the Texas issue was rather cautious and did not reveal the specific policy to be pursued by the government.

> The question of the recovery of Texas, which has been the subject of scandal at home and abroad and for a long time has served as a pretext for abuses of every kind, will be considered with the preferential attention which its nature demands. In this, Mexico has rights that will be recognized and respected, with the same decision and dignity with which independence was obtained and her liberties preserved.[40]

Before the administration made any further declaration of policy in regard to Texas, Minister of Foreign Relations Cuevas was requested by the President to make a careful study of all aspects of the problem to be embodied in a report to Congress.

While this report was in progress, developments in Washington boded ill for previous Mexican contentions in relation to Texas. A joint resolution was passed by both houses of Congress and was signed by President Tyler approving the annexation of Texas if that republic should so desire. Since the Herrera government could not immediately and completely repudiate the foreign policy of the previous administration, the Mexican Minister in Washington, Juan N. Almonte, protested this action on the part of the government of the United States as an "unprecedented outrage of appropriating to itself an integral part of the Mexican territory."[41] He then demanded his passports.[42] When news of these developments reached the Mexican capital, the United States minister was promptly dismissed. This was a very unfortunate occurrence and came before the Herrera government had time to announce a new policy or to send new instructions to the Mexican minister in Washington. It is extremely unlikely that President Herrera would have broken off diplomatic relations with the United States had his government not been obligated to do so by virtue of the impolitic course of action followed by Santa Anna from 1841 to 1844.

---

[39] *Ibid.*, 293.

[40] *Ibid.*, 292.

[41] G. L. Rives, *The United States and Mexico, 1821–1848*, I, 589.

Unfortunately, the era of good feeling that had attended the inauguration of Herrera did not last for long. In Mexico, the weather was more constant than the political scene. The official proposal of the United States to annex Texas and Almonte's subsequent withdrawal, created quite a stir in the Mexican capital. Although the groundwork for this event had been laid by the Santa Anna régime, the Herrera government was criticized for not taking a firmer stand. Chief critics were the *Santanistas,* who were already agitating for a return of the dictator. The object of their attacks, of course, was to shift the blame and responsibility for Mexico's critical situation from themselves to the new administration.

Meanwhile, Herrera's reform program began to make itself felt. Incompetent civil appointees were discharged. Army officers whose commissions were based on nothing more than a personal friendship with Santa Anna were relieved of their commands. Other economies, which all should have recognized as necessary, began to pinch this and that group or interest. General Paredes, who had been appointed commandant-general of Mexico, was disgruntled over his assignment and felt that he deserved a more important post. Efforts to reorganize and liberalize the army alienated other military chiefs. A disastrous earthquake on April 7 added to the unrest, and many of the superstitious marked it as an ill omen for the administration.[43] Within two months the Herrera administration, which had come to office under such auspicious circumstances, was beset by enemies on every hand.

Some idea of the trials of the president may be gained from this summary by Zamacois:

> Full of noble plans for the prosperity of the Nation, President Don José Joaquín de Herrera tried to eliminate party differences and searched for a way to conciliate them, appointing people of different political beliefs, with-

---

[42] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.,* IV, 538. Almonte wrote on February 28, 1845, that the United States Senate had voted for annexation. He was delayed in leaving Washington due to the illness of his daughter.

[43] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.,* IV, 539. Much damage was done and the religious orders performed a great service during these days of misery and suffering. The halls of Congress had to be closed several days for repairs.

> out paying attention to anything but the merit of the individual; but his noble purposes served only to bring upon him the enmity of these very parties. . . . More enemies were made by trying to reduce the excessive number of employees which had steadily increased since independence and had reached an astounding figure due to the limitless appointments which Santa Anna had made during the last administration. Each step taken by the new president to correct an abuse, which the Nation [as a whole] noted with satisfaction, was violently criticized by those who opposed reform . . . . his very zeal in trying to remedy the evils which afflicted the Republic, due to the chaos engendered by continuous revolutions, created for him enemies among those who could not prosper except in the revolutionary atmosphere.[44]

The Baronesa de Wilson declared that the policy of Herrera was extremely wise, but he "met opposition in those ambitious men who profiit by war and the disturbed condition of the Nation."[45] In spite of this opposition, President Herrera stuck to his judicious policy in regard to Texas and to his program of gradual liberal reform.

On May 6, 1845, President Herrera issued a manifesto to the nation setting forth the administration's policies on the proposed annexation of Texas by the United States and the internal reform program. He proposed a smaller army to be composed of better-trained and better-equipped soldiers. This, he felt, was preferable to a large number of undisciplined troops. He reviewed the course that his administration had followed and intended to pursue in the future. Herrera publicly stated that the recognition of Texas' independence was more desirable than seeing her added to the United States and that efforts were being made to reach a settlement by negotiation which would be "honorable and advantageous" to Mexico. This open statement attracted the bitter criticism of those adversely affected by the reform program and those who wanted to go to war with the United States rather than change the untenable position previously taken by the Santa Anna government. There was rumor of seizing the president and putting him in prison; even assassination was mentioned.[46] Herrera continued to maintain a resolute course and walked the streets of the capital without bodyguard.

Meanwhile, on March 11, Minister Cuevas made his report to Congress based on an analysis of the Texas problem. He frankly admitted that there were two courses open to Mexico. One was to continue the old plan of action by insisting that Texas was still a part of the Mexican federation. This course, he said, would undoubtedly lead to war, not only with Texas but also with the

---

[44] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XII, 386–388.

[45] Baronesa de Wilson, *op. cit.*, 123.

[46] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 694.

United States. The alternative course was to make every effort to prevent the annexation of Texas to the United States by promptly recognizing her independence on the basis that Texas remain an independent and separate republic. Cuevas advised against the first of these, since "Texas already has in fact withdrawn from the Mexican union."[47] He added that Mexico's own instability and internal revolutions had been responsible for this separation. He declared also that

> It is not a question of the rights of Mexico, which are unquestionable, but the advisability of deciding on a long and costly war.[48]

Such a war, Cuevas predicted, would bring useless sacrifices and greater losses in territory. He pointed out that it was not only impossible to compel Texas to return to the Mexican union but that it was highly undesirable that she do so.

> The population of Texas is completely foreign. It has no sympathy for the Mexican nation. Their customs are not only different, but in opposition: . . . To believe that Texas could continue united to Mexico with the population that it has living there today would be an inexcusable error and would result only in continued revolution.[49]

On the other hand, Cuevas argued that by recognizing the independence of Texas, annexation efforts on the part of the United States might be thwarted. Texas would then serve as a buffer state which, it was hoped, would check the aspirations of the disciples of "Manifest Destiny" short of Mexico's borders. Cuevas also intimated that a monetary settlement might be obtained from Texas in exchange for acknowledging her freedom. The decision as to which path to follow, Cuevas warned, involved the very existence of Mexico. "The independence of Texas is a misfortune which we will always lament, but its annexation to the United States might be fatal."[50] He concluded by proposing that the administration be authorized to fix definitely the relations between Mexico and Texas.[51] It was impossible at that point to indicate the exact basis for negotiations, but Congress was assured that the honor of the nation would be maintained and that legislative opinion would be reflected in any agreement which might be forthcoming.

In this change of Mexican policy, the British and French governments showed great interest. British Minister to Mexico Charles

---

[47] "Memoria de Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores y Gobernación, Leída al Congreso, Marzo 11, 1845," p. 14, in *Colección de Memorias—Relaciones*, Vol. 2, Doc. 18.

[48] *Ibid.*, 16.

[49] *Ibid.*, 17.

[50] *Ibid.*, 19.

[51] *Ibid.*; Rives, *op. cit.*, I, 699.

Bankhead and French Minister de Ciprey were instructed by their respective governments to encourage and strengthen the Herrera administration in its determination to treat with Texas on recognition. In Texas, the British chargé d'affaires, Captain Charles Elliot, and the French chargé, Count de Seligny, exerted similar efforts to persuade the government of Texas to make a final agreement with Mexico in the hope that the movement for annexation to the United States might be defeated. Both Britain and France professed no ulterior motives in regard to Texas.[52] They maintained that an independent Texas was more advantageous to their national interests from a commercial standpoint, particularly as a source of cotton, than she would be as a part of the United States. These nations, therefore, gladly offered their services as mediatory channels in an attempt to restore friendly relations between Mexico and Texas on the basis of Mexican recognition.

By the end of March, Captain Elliot had persuaded the Texas authorities to open negotiations with Mexico on the following bases:

> 1. That Mexico should at once propose the acknowledgment of the complete Independence of Texas. 2. That Texas upon her part should, in that case, stipulate in the treaty never to annex herself, or to become subject to any country whatever. 3. That the question of limits, and indemnity for any portion of the territory should be the subject of Negotiation, and if disputes or difficulties should arise in the Negotiations, these would be submitted to the arbitration of umpires.[53]

Elliot realized that prompt action was necessary, as did Anson Jones, president of the Republic of Texas. Jones wanted to effect a preliminary agreement with Mexico in order that Texas might have a choice of either annexation to the United States or independence and recognition thereof by Mexico. Another reason for speed, as Elliot observed, was that the American *chargé d'affaires,* Major A. J. Donelson, was expected to arrive in Texas momentarily. His presence would give renewed stimulus to the annexationists.

With these considerations in mind, Jones wrote to Aberdeen, the British Foreign Secretary, as follows:

> Having received certain information of a willingness on the part of Mexico to treat with Texas on the basis of independence, it has been thought best in order to take advantage of this favorable disposition on the part of the

---

[52] Letter of Lord Aberdeen, British Foreign Secretary, to Captain Elliott, British *chargé d'affaires* in Texas, July 3, 1845, quoted in E. D. Adams, ed., *British Diplomatic Correspondence Concerning the Republic of Texas, 1838–1846,* p. 509.

[53] Letter of Captain Elliot to Lord Aberdeen, March 6, 1845, quoted in Adams, *op. cit.,* 455. Elliott reported this as an acceptable basis as summarized by Secretary of State Ashbel Smith. The Texas Congress officially approved these terms on March 29, 1845.

> government of that Country, that Capt. Elliot should proceed without delay to the City of Mexico to press this matter to a conclusion with that government.[54]

Elliott then proceeded immediately to Mexico without waiting for a reply from Aberdeen. He arrived there in early April and informed British Minister Bankhead of his mission. Bankhead relayed the proposal from Texas to Foreign Minister Luis G. Cuevas for his government's consideration. Bankhead reported to Elliot on April 8 that President Herrera and his cabinet were favorable to recognition of Texas but that the "ultra-federal party was pushing them hard at that moment upon the necessity of war."[55]

On April 21, Cuevas presented the Texas plan for recognition to the Mexican Congress. Speaking for President Herrera, he said:

> Texas has just proposed an arrangement and his Excellency, the President *ad interim* [Herrera], who, though strongly impressed with its importance and the urgency of adopting a definite resolution upon the subject, is persuaded that the Executive can do nothing in the matter without previous authorization from Congress. . . . He believes that in the present condition of affairs of Texas he ought not to refuse the negotiation to which he has been invited, and that he should not vary from the obligation which he is under not to decide so delicate a point before it has been previously examined in the Legislative Body.[56]

Almost a month later, after much discussion and debate, Congress voted to accept the preliminary conditions of negotiation as suggested by Texas. President Herrera then issued a public proclamation on May 17, to the effect that:

> The Government has been authorized to listen to the propositions made by Texas, and to enter into an arrangement or make such a Treaty as shall be fitting and honorable for the Republic, communicating it to Congress for their examination and approval.[57]

President Herrera requested, however, that the person or persons sent by Texas to conclude the treaty of peace should take the name of commissioner or commissioners, and that the instant the negotiations began they should bring forward their title of plenipotentiary. Cuevas added that if Texas consented either directly or indirectly to "the law passed in the United States on Annexation," then this agreement entered into between Texas and Mexico should be considered null and void.[58]

---

[54] Letter of Anson Jones, President of the Republic of Texas, to Lord Aberdeen, March 31, 1845, quoted in Adams, *op. cit.*, 461–462.

[55] Letter of Charles Bankhead, British Minister to Mexico, to Captain Elliot, April 8, 1845, quoted in Adams, *op. cit.*, 477.

[56] Rives, *op. cit.*, I, 689; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 539.

[57] A. M. Carreño, *Mexico y los Estados Unidos de America*, 117. A copy of the proclamation was enclosed in Bankhead's letter to Captain Elliot, May 20, 1845, quoted in Adams, *op. cit.*, 489.

Elliot hurried back to Texas, highly pleased with his success. On June 4, President Anson Jones proclaimed to the people of Texas that a preliminary treaty had been entered into with Mexico and proclaimed a formal cessation of hostilities against that republic. This was the high water mark of President Herrera's efforts to prevent annexation of Texas by the United States. The Mexican capital then anxiously awaited the decision of Texas as to whether she would accept recognition or annexation.

Progress of these events did not go unchallenged by the opposition. Bitter criticism of the government's policy in regard to Texas on the part of the *Santanistas,* ambitious army officers and politicians whose patriotism lay only in their caustic tongues and vitriolic pens, soon took the form of a violent press warfare. Friendly to the administration but at times critical on some issues were the *Diario del Gobierno, El Siglo XIX,* the *Monitor Constitucional,* and *La Unión Nacional.* Two of the chief opposition newspapers were *El Amigo del Pueblo* and *La Voz del Pueblo.* Herrera was criticized for acts of omission and commission. He was accused of treason against the nation for his willingness to negotiate with Texas and the United States. In most cases, the cabinet bore the brunt of the attack, being charged with stupidity and a lack of patriotism.[59] Paredes, particularly, attacked the cabinet but said that Herrera, himself, was motivated only by "love of country."[60] The press in the various departments was generally favorable to the president, mainly because Herrera had restored departmental assemblies and their power. Complications were added to the general unrest by rumors that the province of New Mexico, owing to the arbitrary acts of Governor Martínez, was also disposed toward annexation to the United States. Repercussions were also felt in Tabasco where General Ignacio Martínez led an uprising of short duration. General Inclán sent a commission representing the government from Jalapa to Tabasco which, backed by troops, soon had the situation in hand.[61]

---

[58] Letter of Charles Bankhead to Aberdeen, May 20, 1845, quoted in Adams, *op. cit.*, 489.

[59] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 542; Antonio Gibaja y Patrón, *Commentario a las revoluciones sociales de México*, III, 305; Baronesa de Wilson, *op. cit.*, 123. "The partisans of Santa Anna saw in the question of Texas, a chance to reëstablish his popularity, attacking the peaceful attitude of the president and his ministers."

[60] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 708. Paredes, apparently, still hoped for a higher presidential appointment at that time.

[61] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 701–702.

On May 30, President Herrera addressed the Congress and again urged a speedy and honorable settlement of the Texas question with the United States—since this problem, "which has caused so much dissension within the Republic, is the most pressing that faces us today." He warned that if pending negotiations with Texas were not successfully concluded within a very short time, it was almost a certainty that Texas would vote for annexation.[62] A definitive agreement or treaty with Texas, prior to the decision of the Texas Congress, could not be made, however, for the reason that President Jones had decided that it would be useless to send commissioners to Mexico for that purpose until the people of Texas had had an opportunity to express their wishes in the matter. Tension was high in Mexico as the day approached for the Texas Congress to meet. A special session of the Mexican legislative body was called by President Herrera on June 16, but the only decision reached was to continue negotiations with Texas on the basis previously agreed upon and hopefully to await the outcome.[63]

There was not long to wait, however. That very day, the Texas Congress met and passed a joint resolution to accept the United States' proposal of annexation but also provided for a further expression of the will of the people through a special convention on this matter. Another measure of importance that was passed was to allow United States troops to enter Texas to defend her borders, if necessary. When the special Texas Convention was called on July 4, to consider the issue, it also voted overwhelmingly for annexation. Mexican hopes were shattered; and the fundamental basis of her Texas policy, recognition without annexation, was destroyed. Would this mean war with the United States or would President Herrera devise a new policy of conciliation with the United States, based on the arbitration of boundaries, indemnity and pending claims of American citizens against the Mexican government?

During this period, the government of the United States exerted every effort through her *chargé d'affaires* in Texas, Major Donelson, to promote the movement for annexation. She also bitterly denounced British and French interference in this project as secret and underhanded diplomacy. Although the American minister to Mexico had been dismissed early in the year, the United States still received reports from the Mexican capital from its *chargé d'affaires,* John Black. The tenor of his reports to his government as to the Mexican government's attitude toward the United States is expressed in his dispatch of June 21, to James Buchanan, Secretary of State.

---

[62] "El General Herrera, al cerrar dichas sesiones, en 30 de Mayo, 1845," in *Informes y manifiestos,* I, 298.

[63] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.,* IV, 543.

> I do not think the present government has any serious idea of carrying on any other kind of war [meaning other than a paper war], against us—though forced by the opposition to put itself in a belligerent attitude, to show its patriotism.[64]

William S. Parrott, confidential agent of President Polk in Mexico, wrote in a similar vein. On June 10, he said that he had received information indirectly from a member of President Herrera's cabinet that

> it does not seem that the present administration has any intention or desire whatever, to come to an open rupture with the United States. To the contrary, it is preparing the public mind for the worst, namely the annexation of Texas to the American Union. . . . Such, however, has been the excitement kept alive by those opposed to the present order of things, that it has been necessary for the Government to participate, apparently, in it.[65]

As further proof that the Mexican government recognized the imminent possibility of annexation of Texas to the United States and was becoming reconciled to that fact, Parrot informed Buchanan that General Gómez Pedraza, moderate-liberal party leader, had recently made a speech to Congress stating that England, France, Spain, and Portugal had given up or ceded vast territories to other nations without impairing their sovereignty. He implied that Mexico likewise might give up lands through cession or sale without loss of dignity, sovereignty, or national honor.[66]

President Herrera had worked diligently for a settlement with Texas as his speeches, those of his Minister of Foreign Relations, and the diplomatic correspondence on the subject attest; but time, public sentiment in Texas, and political opposition in Mexico defeated his purpose. He did not, however, give up his fundamental idea of making a peaceful arrangement of differences with the United States through arbitration. His speech of May 30 and that of Gómez Pedraza were designed to prepare the way for negotiations with the United States for an arrangement of boundaries, indemnity for the loss of Texas, and adjustment of claims. They were also made in an effort to cushion the public mind to the shock of threatened annexation. Efforts of President Herrera along these lines were made more difficult when, in July, General Zachary Taylor moved with United States troops from Fort Jesup on the western line of Louisiana to Corpus Christi. Many Mexicans regarded this as an invasion of "Mexican territory" and brought pressure to bear on the Herrera government to take steps to drive the invaders out of Texas. Herrera endeavored to placate the opposition by making preliminary defense preparations and by sending additional forces to the Rio Grande. These forces were ordered, however, not to cross the river and to avoid all hostilities with the American troops. Succeeding events were to frustrate Herrera's best efforts to preserve the peace and to effect an amicable settlement with the United States.

---

[64] Letter of John Black, United States *chargé d'affaires* to Mexico, to James Buchanan, June 21, 1845, in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, IV, 60.

[65] Letter of W. S. Parrott, confidential agent of the United States in Mexico, to James Buchanan, June 10, 1845, in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, 33.

[66] Letter of W. S. Parrott to James Buchanan, June 29, 1845, in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, 40–41.

Meanwhile, constitutional reform in Mexico moved slowly. The first problem was whether the old or the new Congress had the right to modify the Organic Bases. It was finally decided to refer the matter to the departmental assemblies. As reports gradually came in from the departments, it appeared that a majority were in favor of federalism. The more rabid federalists became impatient with procedural delays and wanted to effect a return to the federal system at once. Many of Herrera's own party became disgusted because he insisted on following laborious legal processes in an effort to promote unity rather than promptly declaring for federalism, come what might. The centralists, of course, wanted to maintain the existing system with modifications. The monarchists and some of the clergy continued to discuss possibilities of bringing over a royal prince from Europe, while the *Santanistas* insisted that he be freed from prison and returned to power. It was their renewed efforts that finally brought a sentence from the jury considering Santa Anna's case and the decision to ship him out of the country in order that he would not become the center of a new revolution.[67]

One of the leaders of the partisans of Santa Anna was General Joaquín Rangel. He planned on a bold stroke: President Herrera would be captured with his cabinet, and Santa Anna would be returned from exile, barely begun in Havana. Accordingly, Rangel first bought off the palace guard and a majority of the battalion of the *Supremos Poderes*. On June 7, at three o'clock in the afternoon, he took action and raised the cry of "Federation and Santa Anna." The fact that there was little relation between federation and the ex-dictator, who had done his best to abolish the federal system, seemed to make no difference to Rangel. He gained access to the presidential chambers and captured Herrera and three of his ministers and held them for a matter of minutes. Calm in the face of danger, President Herrera spoke to the troops and ordered them to remain loyal to the government. He was also able to get word through to the Minister of War of what was taking place. The minister soon arrived with the fourth battalion of the palace troops, which was loyal; and these forces, aided by those who had been reconverted to the cause of constitutional government by Herrera's speech, soon restored order, and the mutiny was quickly quelled.[68] Rangel fled, but was taken prisoner several days later when he was found hiding in a house in the *Callejón de Talavera.* He was promptly exiled and other leaders were imprisoned.[69] Again, President Herrera had not insisted on the death penalty but had followed a principle of justice tempered with mercy. In some respects this was a mistake since other dissatisfied military leaders saw that they could rebel against the government and not expect to pay the supreme penalty if they failed. Mere exile with a chance to return later was not enough to dissuade them from resorting to the *pronunciamiento.*

---

[67] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 694–696. Santa Anna departed June 1, 1845.

Since Herrera felt that by his election the people had expressed "unequivocal proof that they desired constitutional development" and liberal reforms, he continued to carry out his policies as best he could in the face of rising opposition from ambitious military leaders and disgruntled politicians and office-seekers.[70]

Some positive gains were made, although, in almost every phase of the reform program, criticism retarded progress. An effort was made to improve the morale and morals of the army. Places of ill repute, such as *El Cuartelito* in Jalapa, much frequented by soldiers, were closed.[71] New rules and regulations were issued which emphasized the fact that soldiers were also citizens and that, in protecting the rights of the civilian population, they were also protecting their own interests. One such regulation prohibited a body of troops on the march from occupying the whole street. Herrera rightly felt that the army all too often held the opinion that it enjoyed special privileges and that it was not bound by the ordinary laws governing civilians. This separate class consciousness he endeavored to dispel. Ranches and farms along the frontiers had been ravaged anew by Indian tribes from across the Rio Grande. Additional forces were sent to these frontier outposts to give them protection insofar as limited resources would permit. He continued to stress the need for better medical attention for the army and the importance of making an army career attractive to men of the medical profession. He again proposed a strong citizen militia in an effort to reduce the expense of maintaining a large army, at the same time providing adequate defense and the continuation of business and agriculture. Many of the Indian villages were all but depleted of their male population. In previous years, armed bands of troops would sweep down on the natives, seizing the men to fill their ranks. By this use of force, "thousands of men had been added to the army, practically stifling all local agriculture."[72] Herrera ordered that this inhuman practice must cease and proposed to put recruiting on a voluntary basis. As was inevitable, this farsighted policy was vigorously opposed by the military clique, composed largely of the military adherents of the Santa Anna school of thought who used their rank and the army to advance their personal and political interests.

---

[68] Baronesa de Wilson, *op. cit.*, 123. "Calm before the danger, the Chief of State presented himself before the mutinous troops, ordering them to obey his commands." Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XII, 388; Arrangoiz, *México desde 1808 hasta 1867*, II, 262.

[69] Some days before the mutiny of General Rangel, President Herrera had a warning dream that such a revolt would take place. In the dream he was advised to open a door from his quarters to those of the Minister of War in order to get aid. Acting on this premonition, Herrera had a door cut out where none had existed before between his rooms and those of the Minister of War. It was by the use of this door that aid was obtained and the attempted capture of the President and his three ministers was thwarted. Herrera is reported to have laughed and joked with his former captors telling them they had no chance of success when he had been forewarned in this way. Story told by José María Roa Bárcena, nephew of Herrera, quoted in Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," p. 43, in his *Historia genealógica*, II.

[70] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.*, III, 656–657. "La Nación dió esa vez una prueba inequívoca que quería la marcha constitucional . . . ."

[71] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.*, III, 656.

Most of the government workers had become lazy, lacked incentive, and were generally incompetent. They had become parasites living off of the government, expecting to retain their positions through friendship or political favor. Some of the officials, though drawing their salaries, had sold their positions to others who did the work for less pay. The unwise patronage policy of the Santa Anna administration had been very costly. There was no sense of responsibility, civic pride, or love of work. This spirit had its effect on the nation as a whole and the resultant lack of incentive and enterprise made industrial and manufacturing progress impossible.[73] Revolutionary conditions and the failure of the government to protect infant industry were other causes for this stagnant economic situation. The rugged nature of the country made internal commerce and communication most difficult, but proposals of the Herrera administration to open new roads and to improve old routes went begging in Congress, due to lack of funds. The Chamber of Deputies did, however, request the departmental assemblies to make a survey of their states to see what improvements might be made to stimulate industry, commerce, agriculture, and general progress. A special reform commission was appointed to consider their suggestions. Congress authorized a loan of five hundred thousand pesos to meet the most pressing expenses of government. A proposal was made to establish a bank of public credit with the purpose of funding the foreign debt and consolidating the internal debt, but it was never carried into effect.[74] The Department of New Mexico was given the right to export the products of that area duty free for another ten years. Also, the export of dye woods and logs from Campeche was allowed with no restriction.[75]

---

[72] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XII, 384.

[73] *Ibid.*, 675; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 278. The author states that the "nation had become gangrenous with *empleomanía.*"

In Vera Cruz, balloonist J. B. Belliard was granted license to experiment and make balloon ascensions, but his request for funds to aid in his work was not granted. Efforts were made to curb unlicensed medical practice and to improve the standards of that profession. A doctor by the name of Claudio Claudon, who claimed to have had extensive training in Paris, was denied the right to practice when he refused to submit his credentials to the Medical Faculty of the University of Mexico for approval.[76] Dr. Lefebre, a quack who concocted various medicines in his home and sold them at exorbitant prices, was ordered to give an account of his actions.

Since some of the laws dated from the colonial period and were ambiguous and contradictory, they needed to be reclassified and codified. Accordingly, measures were taken to draw up a new legal code. Education received what stimulus limited resources would allow, particularly primary education in the departments. Steps were taken to improve prisons and insane asylums and to check juvenile delinquency. Several new hospitals were established. President Herrera personally addressed the religious order of St. Vincent de Paul, and granted it freedom to practice its creed and to set up hospitals in the republic. In Mexico City, the hospital of the Divine Savior was established through the efforts of leading citizens.[77] New emphasis was placed on agriculture with the appointment by President Herrera of Melchor Ocampo as director of the National School of Agriculture. The *Escuela de Artes* received a new director also, in the person of Bruno Aguilar.[78]

---

[74] "Memoria de Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores y Gobernación, Leída al Congreso," March 11, 1845. Doc. 18, p. 43, from *Colección de memorias—Relaciones,* II, signed Luis G. Cuevas.

[75] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* III, 578.

[76] *Ibid.,* 656.

[77] *Ibid.,* 688. Sra. Doña María Ana Gómez de la Cortina, D. José Guadalupe Romero, D. Manuel Andrade, and D. Ramon Sáenz were particularly active in setting up this hospital.

President Herrera spoke to the Congress on May 30, at its closing session. He praised its efforts in restoring "liberty, peace, and the representative system," and laws had been passed, he said, designed to develop "a love and veneration for republican institutions of government."[79] In summarizing the accomplishments of the administration and the difficulties it faced, the president stated that he had tried to weld all parties together into a coöperative working unit, although his moderate policy had been construed by some as weakness and lack of vigor.[80] He stated that the civil service had been opened to people of all parties who were qualified to hold office. The courts "had been given complete freedom of action within the law," and the Supreme Court and the Minister of Justice had initiated a program to establish "a uniform code of law."[81] In addition to the progressive measures previously discussed, he added that banditry had been suppressed and forced loans discontinued. Equal tax laws had been enacted in their stead. Herrera concluded by praising the progress made by Congress in providing the legal procedure necessary to reform the Organic Bases.[82]

After a month's vacation, Congress opened the second of its regular sessions on the first of July. President Herrera, as customary, delivered the opening address. He again stressed that any change in the fundamental law should come from the people through the departmental assemblies. Deploring the state of unrest, he said:

> All efforts to placate a few trouble makers seem to have failed. . . . Neither the amnesty granted by Congress, the conciliatory policy of the government, nor the vote of the people has been able to satisfy these few who desire to make a *patrimonio* of the Treasury.[83]

---

[78] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 699. In January, 1845, the celebrated Zacatecan poet, Fernando Calderón, died. He had written many excellent poems to liberty, independence, and victory.

[79] "El General Herrera, al cerrar dichas sesiones, en 30 de Mayo, 1845," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 297.

[80] *Ibid.*; José María Mateos, *Historia de la masonería en México*, 92. "El Sr. Herrera se propuso obrar libre de todo compromiso con los partidos y esta conducta decente y moderada fué acusada de debil por cada uno de los partidos que no encontraba apoyo en el Presidente."

[81] "El General Herera, al cerrar dichas sesiones, en 30 de Mayo, 1845," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 297.

[82] *Ibid.*, 298.

[83] "El General Herrera, al abrir las sesiones del segundo periodo en 1 de Júlio de 1845," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 303.

Herrera sternly charged the members of Congress with their unmistakable duty to the nation:

> Our duty, gentlemen, is to respect the fundamental law, to sustain it and to unite all our forces in order that no faction, whatever be the guise in which it is presented, will be able to overthrow this system of justice and legality in which the citizens of this nation have placed their hopes.[84]

This decisive statement, which went to the very root of Mexican governmental instability, could hardly be termed "weakness." It was a plea for stability and political faith, for constitutionality and national unity. No one saw more clearly than President Herrera how necessary these were to national peace, prosperity, and progress.

Justin H. Smith, author of *The War with Mexico,* characterized the first Herrera administration as follows:

> Santa Anna's legal successor was General J. J. Herrera, president of the council of state, a fair, pacific, reasonable, and honest man; and the new ministry commanded respect. For a time the halcyon days of 1825 returned. This was the first great popular movement since Mexico had become independent. . . . But the situation was extremely difficult. Santa Anna's constitution, which commanded no respect because it was neither authorized by the people nor endorsed by good results, was still in force. All who believed in his system, including twenty thousand half-pay—or rather no pay—officers, dissipated, hungry and reckless, began at once to plot for his return or for some one of the same kind to succeed him. Paredes, representing the Church and the aristocracy, stood at the head of the main army, and soon showed a disposition to hold aloof. Indeed, every prominent man had a busily scheming clique.[85]

These were the disillusioned "patriots" who wanted war with the United States, hoping thereby to improve their situation in some way . Aside from the fact that Herrera believed that Texas was lost to Mexico forever, he also knew that the army was inefficient, poorly equipped, and could not be depended upon to obey orders. The government had neither funds nor resources with which to prosecute a successful war against her stronger northern neighbor. These considerations had prompted him to insist upon negotiation as the sanest and only reasonable course left to Mexico.

In July, excitement over the Texas issue reached fever pitch when news came to the Mexican capital that the Texas Convention also had voted for annexation and that American forces had entered Texas. Many of those who had hoped for a peaceful settlement now thought that war was inevitable.[86] The pressure of events forced the government to take defensive measures. Congress authorized the Minister of Finance, de la Rosa, to obtain a loan of three million pesos for defense preparations. The departments were given the power to raise bodies of militia and new troops were sent to the frontier to be in readiness for any eventuality. Students and citizens made small monthly contributions to aid in the preparedness program.[87] The president gave the newly-created civilian militia the title of "Defenders of Independence and of the Laws."[88] Departmental assemblies voted to place all their resources at the disposal of the government. Young hot-heads and old soreheads asked permission to lead the first troops against the prospective enemy. The press increased its din and accused all who favored a peaceful settlement of being traitors to the nation. Even more important than retaining Texas seemed to be a desire to maintain national honor and dignity.[89] This substitution of passion for reason could have only the direst consequences.

---

[84] *Ibid.*, 304.

[85] Smith, *The War with Mexico*, I, 55.

[86] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 702.

One of the factors that had weakened the hand of the executive during these months was the provisional nature of the presidency. With the capture of Santa Anna, Congress had fixed the date for the election of a constitutional president and other officials as the first of August. The three principal candidates were Provisional President Herrera, Manuel Gómez Pedraza, and Juan N. Almonte. Elections were held in an atmosphere of ominous quiet. When the votes of the fourteen departments were counted, it was found that José Joaquín de Herrera had been elected to succeed himself as constitutional president. Although Herrera's policy had consistently been to settle by peaceful methods the Texas question and other problems pending with the United States, many seemed to think that recent preparations for defense indicated a change in that policy. Others hoped that President Herrera could find a way out of Mexico's dilemma short of war. Another group felt that it was inadvisable to change horses in midstream. This, in some measure, explains the reëlection of President Herrera, which was rather surprising in the light of the criticism his administration had sustained. The cabinet, particularly, had been mercilessly attacked. Minister of Foreign Relations Cuevas had been charged with

---

[87] *Ibid.*, 703. The money raised in this manner was too small to be effective but indicated the spirit of the times.

[88] W. S. Parrott, United States confidential agent in Mexico, to James Buchanan, Secretary of State, August 29, 1845, quoted in *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, 69. Parrott says that "in two weeks' time only 29 *defenders* of the *independence* and *laws* had been recruited in the capital." This figure is probably in error, however.

[89] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, 393. Americans have never been able to understand the Mexicans' exaggerated conception of personal and national honor which is, more often than logic and reason, the basis for their action.

"stupid bungling" in not being able to prevent Texas from voting for annexation.[90] Minister of Finance de la Rosa, who had obtained the three million peso loan, was accused of making ruinous contracts with the house of Carruste and Company.[91] As soon as the results of the election were known, the cabinet resigned as a body on August 11, in order that the President could form a new ministry. Although this was a customary procedure, the cabinet was anxious to resign because they knew that Herrera had not changed his ideas in regard to Texas and that those who expected a change of policy were in for a rude shock.[92]

President Herrera proceeded to appoint a new ministry made up of outstanding moderates. His selections were made with the advice and counsel of Mariano Otero and Gómez Pedraza, recognized leaders of the moderate-liberal party. For the critical post of Foreign Relations, Manual de la Peña y Peña was selected. He was an able lawyer with "little interest in literature and depicted as fat, broad-shouldered and ceremonious."[93] He, like the president, opposed a policy that would lead to war with the United States. The eminent and eloquent jurist, Bernardo Couto, was given the portfolio of Justice and Clerical Affairs. He was small in stature, quiet, serious, and rather ordinary in appearance but he possessed a concise, logical, and well-trained mind. Because of poor health, it was necessary for him to rest several hours a day in his study. Probably the least well known of the cabinet was Fernández de Castillo, Minister of Finance. This man was tall, jovial, coöperative, and kindly towards his subordinates. To the post of Minister of War was named General Pedro Anaya, who, it was rumored, was selected at the specific instance of Gómez Pedraza.[94] Anaya had taken part in the War for Independence but had attracted little attention since that time. He was pale, of brusque manners, somewhat given to affectation, but of immaculate dress and generous to his enemies. With these advisers, President Herrera hoped to steer the nation away from the dangerous trend of current diplomatic events and to continue his program of liberal reform.

---

[90] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* III, 703.

[91] *Ibid.*

[92] One of the leading groups working for the overthrow of the cabinet was the secret society which met at the home of Mariano Salas. It was composed of aristocrats, clergy, and army officers. Salas' wife, Pepita Cardeña, was a very able and intelligent woman who had great influence on her husband and in the society's councils. Guillermo Prieto, *Memorias de mis tiempos, 1828 á 1853,* p. 177.

[93] *Ibid.,* 174; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México,* II, 283.

[94] Prieto, *op. cit.,* 174.

On September 14, 1845, Peña y Peña issued a public proclamation to the effect

> that the general Congress has decreed, according to the power vested in it by Article 160 of the Organic Bases, that General of Division José Joaquín de Herrera has been duly elected Constitutional President of the Republic.[95]

He also informed the Minister of War that "on September 16, promptly at nine o'clock General Herrera will present himself in the *Salón de Sesiones* to take the oath of office." This was to be followed by a Thanksgiving Mass and a parade to the Alameda. Anaya was requested to make the necessary arrangements for the parade and to have the military band on hand for the occasion.[96]

Inauguration ceremonies took place on the day appointed, and President Herrera spoke to Congress after taking the oath of office. He said, in part:

> The oath which I have just taken before God and in your presence will not be an act of mere ceremony. In taking it, I have made a new and solemn promise to protect and defend the fundamental laws of the Republic, and to further, above all else, the welfare and prosperity of the Nation. . . . You, honored and illustrious Representatives of a generous Mexican people, receive in their name my humble appreciation and know that my heart is deeply moved.[97]

Herrera stated that the primary objective of his administration would be to comply faithfully and punctually with the laws. "I am convinced," he said, "that good laws are the only safeguard of national happiness."[98] Happiness cannot be obtained without order and peace. "Order, peace, and equal justice are the fundamental bases of the prosperity of all nations."[99] Although the president solicited the support of all parties, he said that he would "repress with vigor any rebellion that threatened the public transquility or the authority of the government."[100] He reiterated his proposals for liberal reform and asked for patient forbearance in the matter of constitutional change. He criticized the practice of changing governments by force of arms.

---

[95] Proclamation of the *Ministro de Relaciones*, Peña y Peña, dated September 14, 1845, quoted in *Expediente de Herrera*, III, Doc. 733.

[96] Letter of Peña y Peña to Pedro Anaya, dated September 14, 1845, quoted in *Expediente de Herrera*, III, Doc. 731.

[97] *Discurso pronounciado ante el Congreso General por el Exmo. Sr. General D. José J. de Herrera*, September 16, 1845, pp. 3–4. This is a separately published speech found in the Biblioteca de Historia de Hacienda, National Palace, Mexico City.

[98] *Ibid.*, 5.

[99] *Ibid.*

[100] *Ibid.*, 6.

> I will always regard with abhorrence the method of settling political questions on the field of battle when they should be discussed, examined calmly and reasonably, and their solutions provided by the sovereign Congress as the chosen representatives of the Nation.[101]

With reference to foreign affairs, President Herrera stated that his administration desired the most friendly relations with all nations, but at the same time that it would "protect the sovereignty and independence of the Republic, its honor and dignity."[102] He concluded his speech with a statement that might be interpreted as a veiled threat against the United States in case negotiations failed to produce a solution to present problems.

> I pray that God will guide you in your legislative duties. That the God of Justice and Peace will grant them to my administration. That the God of armies will protect us on the field of battle.[103]

The president of the Chamber of Deputies, Demetrio Montes de Oca, replied to the president's speech and pledged the coöperation and support of that body.

Although the basic premise of negotiation, recognition without annexation, had been destroyed by Texas' decision to join the Union in July, Herrera still hoped to settle matters peaceably. He felt that a war with the United States would not only result in the loss of Texas but additional territory as well, since it was becoming increasingly apparent that President Polk also had his eye on California. An American naval squadron sent to patrol off Vera Cruz had been increased, because of Mexican efforts to prepare for war. Herrera stated that, in case the squadron were withdrawn, his government would be disposed to receive a *comisionado* from the United States to consider the Texas question. Those who thought that President Herrera had changed his policy toward the United States now had their answer. With his reëlection, Herrera felt that:

> more than ever, he was obligated to merit the confidence of the people who had elected him, and he tried to pursue the policy which he had previously adopted in regard to Texas.[104]

The press renewed its attacks against the administration's conciliatory attitude and raised the cry of "perfidy and treason."[105]

---

[101] *Ibid.*, 11.

[102] *Ibid.*, 12.

[103] *Ibid.*, 13.

[104] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XII, 393.

[105] Letters of President Herrera to General Paredes of August 30, 1845, and September 13, 1845, from *Paredes y Arrillaga Papers*, Folder 1, discuss the slanderous attacks on the administration. Herrera asks Paredes to remain loyal and to take these criticisms philosophically as he is doing.

The reaction seemed to be that if Texas were lost, national honor would be offended. As in a personal duel, it was felt that satisfaction must be demanded and that a certain amount of bloodletting was necessary to assuage the injury.

During October and November there were several developments of interest. Most significant of all, the conservatives and liberals renewed their never-ending struggle. As one Mexican historian has said, "they were more interested in occupying public office than they were in the triumph of their political ideas."[106] It is difficult to say which was the greater evil, lack of sufficient funds to operate the government or the political immorality of Mexico's leaders which prompted them to revolt at the slightest pretext in order to obtain some temporary advantage. In the recent elections, Bustamante, who had returned from exile, had been elected as a deputy to Congress. Of far greater importance was the election of a young man to the departmental assembly of Oaxaca by the name of Benito Juárez, of whom much was to be heard later. A sign of progress was seen in the opening of a canal between Lake Camaronera and the Tenoya River.[107] There was one less trouble maker when Canalizo's sentence of deportation was finally imposed, and he set sail from Vera Cruz for Cádiz on the 25th of October. However, highwaymen and armed guerrilla bands were becoming more numerous, especially along the roads from the seacoast to the capital. The newspaper, *El Monitor,* made the suggestion that the clergy make a loan to the government of fifteen million pesos to be used largely for defense purposes.[108] Since the Church possessed great wealth and owned a large number of properties, it seemed to be a fair proposal. It seemed particularly reasonable in the light of possible invasion by the United States, which, if it occurred, would result in great loss to the Church. This idea was taken up by the other newspapers, and Congress regarded it with approval. Here was a real opportunity to show an unselfish patriotism on the part of the clergy. As one author has said, "For the clergy, the hour of proof had arrived."[109] However, the Church was not kindly disposed to the idea and managed to save itself for the moment by quick action on the part of its partisans.[110]

Herrera intimates that Valentín Gómez Farías is the leader of the opposition and that Paredes should be on guard against revolt. Of course, Paredes was also conspiring, as Herrera well knew.

[106] Emilio del Castillo Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX,* Vol. XXIV, p. 239.

[107] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* III, 713.

[108] *Ibid.,* 716.

[109] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México,* II, 285.

[110] *Ibid.*

Diplomatic relations during the Herrera administration, with the exception of those with the United States, went smoothly for the most part. Relations with Spain had been cordial and a new minister, Salvador Bermúdez de Castro, had arrived in Mexico during March.[111] Mexico had protested to England and France concerning the designs of the United States on Texas, and those two European powers, hoping to profit by an independent Texas and to forestall possible annexation, as we have seen, strongly urged that Mexico immediately recognize Texas independence.[112] Little was done during the first Herrera administration towards funding the foreign debt, the chief creditor nation being Britain.

Shortly after Herrera's constitutional term had begun, there occurred a minor incident involving the French Minister which developed into quite a diplomatic scandal. It seems that the French Minister, Baron de Ciprey, had gone with his retinue to the public bath of Delicias. When a dog made an irregular appearance, his presence was protested to the owner. The owner then chastised the servant responsible for the canine misdemeanor. The scene drew something of a crowd and heated words between Mexicans and French resulted in a small riot. The French Minister managed to escape but returned shortly with a revolver with which he planned to extricate his servants from the *mêlée*. Voluminous diplomatic correspondence, in a serious but ridiculous vein, followed this episode. The French felt that the dignity and inviolability of their minister had been attacked, while the Mexicans objected to the minister's use of firearms. One night at the National Theater, the French Minister engaged in an altercation over the matter with Mariano Otero, the editor of *El Siglo XIX*. After much ill feeling, the minister was withdrawn by his own government, thereby ending the squabble.[113]

During July and August, practically nothing had been done to solve the new problem created by the annexation of Texas to the United States. Mexican fears subsided somewhat when General Taylor made no move to advance southward from Corpus Christi. Also, the popular mind was occupied with the presidential elections in August. Finally, more sober thought revealed that Mexico was unprepared for war and that arbitration was the only sensible course. Commenting on the inability of the Mexican government to wage war at that time, Parrott wrote to Buchanan that

---

[111] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 538.

[112] Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 55.

[113] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 717; *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, 82–83. The French minister accused Otero of writing articles against him which the editor neither confirmed nor denied. The minister then spit in Otero's face and struck him with his cane. Leaving, he said, "You know where I live if you want satisfaction." This episode greatly incensed the Mexicans.

> It is true, the means for carrying on a war, offensive or defensive, are not to be had, the troops are foraging on the way without shoes to their feet or shirts to their backs, and disaffection is visible in all quarters. These are the reasons why such quietude reigns in the Capital.[114]

Three days later, Parrott sent a dispatch to his government concerning the friendly attitude of President Herrera's new cabinet.

> The present cabinet, I am well informed, desires to settle the differences, pending between the two governments, by negotiations—and that it would make overtures to that effect, if it could act freely; but today it cannot, because of the existence of an obstinate opposition to all its measures. . . . The time, however, is not far distant, when the force of circumstances will compel it to take a more decided course. Every day throws some new obstacle or embarrassment in its way.[115]

Parrott further advised that

> no additional force will be sent to the frontier unless the Government, intimidated as it is, should be compelled to do so by an insincere opposition.[116]

President Herrera was certainly in an unenviable position. To say that his situation was difficult would be a decided understatement. During early September, there were rumors of further insubordination of Paredes in San Luis Potosí and it was even feared that he might seize a convoy of specie then on its way from the interior to Tampico. As an interested observer of the Mexican scene, Parrott reported:

> It would seem, that the Government has, but, one course to take, to put down the pretensions of Paredes, and to paralize the Santa Anna faction, which is becoming stronger and bolder every day, and that is to declare for federation, whether prepared for the change or not, and to arm the militia of the states.[117]

Herrera also realized that something must be done, and that, quickly. Britain and France had indicated that little help could be expected from that quarter if war developed between the United States and Mexico. Relations with France were somewhat strained over the incident involving the French minister, de Ciprey. The

---

[114] Letter of W. S. Parrott to James Buchanan, August 23, 1845, quoted in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, p. 64.

[115] Letter of W. S. Parrott to James Buchanan, August 26, 1845, in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, p. 65.

[116] *Ibid.*

[117] Letter of W. S. Parrott to James Buchanan, September 2, 1845, in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, pp. 70–71.

Herrera administration therefore let it be known to Parrott indirectly that it would consider negotiations with the United States on the Texas question on the basis of arbitration of controversial points, such as boundaries and claims, if the United States would pay Mexico an indemnity for the loss of Texas. This last was most important, not so much from the standpoint of the actual money which might be paid but from the standpoint that public opinion in Mexico might be persuaded to accept the sale of Texas but never its appropriation by the United States. Parrott advised Buchanan of this overture and that he had voiced the following opinion in reply:

> The Government of the United States could never recognize in Mexico the right to claim an indemnity for the annexation of Texas to the American Union; but that, in a treaty of limits, for the sake of peace and good neighborhood, the United States would, no doubt, be disposed, as had been officially stated, to meet Mexico, in a negotiation, upon the most friendly and *liberal* terms. They do not seem to relish this. They fear it will not save their national honor.[118]

Feeling that the Mexican government might now be ready to take up the various points of difference in a formal manner, Black on October 13 addressed a note to Herrera's new Minister of Foreign Relations, Peña y Peña, asking if the Mexican government would receive an envoy from his government with full powers to arrange all the questions pending between the two governments.[119] Two days later, Black went to see Peña y Peña who gave Black this answer:

> . . . although Mexico has been profoundly wronged by the acts committed by the United States in the department of Texas, its government is disposed to receive a *commissioner* from the United States with full powers to treat upon the *present question* in a pacific, reasonable and honorable manner.[120]

Peña y Peña's answer was then forwarded to President Polk. After an exchange of correspondence for final assurance that an American representative would be received, Polk appointed John Slidell as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Mexico. Without waiting for Senate confirmation, Polk sent Slidell on his way. He arrived at Vera Cruz on November 30, but found himself a decidedly unwelcome visitor.

News of Slidell's coming had spread like wildfire, and the opposition press had whipped the people into a frenzy. Herrera was called a traitor, and it was claimed that the government intended to make a treaty with the United States which alienated not only Texas but New Mexico and part of Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas as well.[121] There were cries of "selling out" to the *norteamericanos*. Seizing upon this opportunity, the *Santanistas* worked night and day to undermine the Herrera administration. Their slogan was the "reëstablishment of federalism and the reconquest of Texas."[122] It is of interest to compare this slogan with the campaign cry—"the reoccupation of Oregon and the reannexation of Texas"—which had brought President Polk to office earlier in the year. National blood pressure ran so high that the Herrera government dared not receive Slidell in the capital for fear of a revolution. One of the chief objections to Slidell was that he came as a minister with full powers. To receive him as such, when Mexico had indicated that she would accept a "commissioner" to discuss the Texas question only, was tantamount to admitting being in error by renewing full diplomatic relations with the United States. This fine point of Mexican sensitivity apparently had been lost on President Polk, who failed to recognize the great importance the Mexicans attached to the word, *comisionado*. The tenure of the administration being so delicately balanced, President Herrera requested that Slidell remain in Vera Cruz for the present and not proceed to the capital as he eagerly desired to do. Here again American inability to understand the Mexican temperament and the political wisdom of Herrera's advice proved costly. Insisting on being received, Slidell proceeded to Mexico City where he was courteously and regretfully informed that the president could not recognize him under the existing circumstances. Slidell was informed through Peña y Peña that no definite action could be taken until Congress met the first of January to consider the matter of receiving him in the rôle of minister. However, Slidell was told on December 20 that he could be received as a commissioner to discuss affairs relative only to Texas but that his reception in the status now designated would have to await the final decision on the Texas issue. As he was zealous to accomplish his mission, Slidell fumed and protested the delay. This attitude only served to embarrass further the position of the Mexican government, which was willing enough to enter into negotiations had the situation permitted. President Herrera was greatly distressed that

---

[118] Letter of W. S. Parrott to James Buchanan, September 6, 1845, in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, p. 74.

[119] Arrangoiz, *México desde 1808 hasta 1867*, II, 263.

[120] *Ibid.* Underlining is the author's. Failure of President Polk to understand the significance of the underlined words brought future difficulties.

---

[121] *La Voz del Pueblo*, the month of December, 1845. There were a number of articles during this month attacking the government along these lines. Articles in *El Siglo XIX* were generally friendly during November and December.

[122] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 281. Making the most of popular sentiment, they raised the cry of "el restablecimiento del sistema federal y la reconquista de Tejas."

Slidell had arrived about a month sooner than expected and that the critical political situation made it impossible to receive him in the status designated by President Polk.

Meanwhile, the internal situation was becoming more acute for the Herrera administration. The critical *El Amigo del Pueblo* stated that Herrera had adopted the principles of no party and that there "was no government in Mexico."[123] Even the friendly *El Siglo XIX* said that the short period of peace and unity following the ousting of Santa Anna had been just a "moment of happy illusion."[124] The historian Rivera Cambas, although an admirer of Herrera's personal and civic virtues, deplored his failure to use force to put down all opposition in an effort to carry through his laudable policies. He wrote that "there are times when it is necessary to develop great action and even to trample the laws and personal rights in order to save difficult situations."[125] But Mexico had experienced many examples of this method of procedure, and Herrera hoped for a better way.

For some time there had been rumors that Paredes was plotting to set up a triumvirate which would, of course, include himself.[126] This unworthy son of the republic, still cherishing hopes of becoming president, had been thwarted by Santa Anna in 1841 and by Herrera in 1844. There were rumors also that Santa Anna was planning to defy the government's order and return from Cuba. In early December, General Arista, who was stationed along the northern frontier, wrote to Herrera that he needed more troops to defend the border against possible attack by General Zachary Taylor at Corpus Christi. Herrera, therefore, ordered the forces under General Paredes at San Luis Potosí to march to the frontier. Paredes had other plans, and the troops were mutinous and refused to march. There was an exchange of heated correspondence between the editors of *El Monitor Constitucional* and the military chiefs in command of the rebellious divisions at San Luis and Querétaro. General Arista also wrote to Paredes requesting that he comply with the president's orders and march to his aid, but to no avail. Paredes replied to the Herrera government that he "did not have the resources and supplies to make the long march and that he must protect the merchants in his area going to the fairs."[127] Herrera then ordered Paredes to report to the capital and answer charges of insubordination. President Herrera directed a circular to the other general officers ordering them to obey instructions and at the same time assuring them that his army reform program, to which they objected, was not designed to destroy the army.[128] Paredes neither turned over his command to General Filisola, as directed, nor reported to the capital, nor marched to join Arista. Instead, he began to place his troops in strategic places and to send letters to the various departmental governors soliciting their support.

---

[123] *El Amigo del Pueblo*, November 30, 1845. An article from *La Aurora de la Libertad* of Oaxaca, November 6, 1845, quoted in *El Siglo XIX*, November 18, calls attention to rumors of plottings of Paredes, triumvirates and rebellion in the South. The article asked its readers to remember the rapacity and bad faith of the ambitious leaders of 1841 and "to spare us from armed revolution."

[124] Smith, *The War with Mexico*, I, 56.

[125] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 282. ". . . ciertamente en aquellos momentos se necesitaba más energía que la provenida y las virtudes que tan solo creen conveniente usar de la suavidad que enerva, en ocasiones en que es preciso desarrollar grande acción y aun atropellar derechos para salvar las situaciones difíciles."

[126] Generals Tornel and Almonte would have been the other two members. Federalist General Álvarez also proposed a triumvirate composed of Santa Anna, Herrera, and General Rincón but his plan gained little support due to the incompatibility of the trio. *Justin H. Smith Papers*, IV, 75–76.

On December 14, 1845, the long-dreaded but expected *"grito de rebelión"* was sounded in San Luis Potosí. The *Plan de San Luis Potosí* was promulgated by Paredes and immediately seconded by General Manuel Romero, commandant-general of the department.[129] The reason given for the pronouncement was that

> . . . territory of the Republic was to be alienated, staining forever national honor with an everlasting infamy in consenting to treat with the perfidious cabinet of the United States upon the alienation of the revolted province.[130]

The plan alleged that the Herrera regíme had planned

> to dissolve the army, whose views were in open conflict with the opinions of the government which had destroyed the army's source of income.[131]

Paredes charged the government with inactivity and said that "repeated pleas of the army to occupy the territory against the enemies who had invaded it" had been disregarded.[132] He said that the evils which beset the nation needed "quick and effective remedy" and this could not be accomplished by the government then in office. A change of executive and legislative power was demanded. Paredes promised that an extraordinary Congress would be called to consider the nation's problems. The ultimate goal of the revolution may have been to set up a monarchy, since Paredes was encouraged in his *pronunciamiento* by the monarchists and the Church, who were of the opinion that only a throne could save Mexico from anarchy and the ambitions of the United States.

---

[127] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 546. Earlier, he had pled ill health.

[128] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 284.

[129] General Romero reportedly addressed a group plotting the revolt in San Luis as follows: [The present administration came to power] "in a happy moment brought about by the unity of all parties, and supported by the votes and hopes of all people, [but] it has made them a laughing stock by an incomprehensible blindness, leading the Republic to the very brink of the precipice. . . . they have tried to make the most ridiculous follies the basis of our foreign policy, pretending to free us from a *necessary* and *glorious* war, by means of concessions which lowered our dignity." Carlós Pereyra, *Tejas, la primera desmembración de México*, 231.

[130] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XII, 399.

[131] *Ibid.*

Guillermo Prieto has severely criticized Paredes for his traitorous and criminal conduct at the Hacienda de la Pila in San Luís in rebelling against President Herrera's constitutional government. He also described Paredes rather vividly:

> He [Paredes] was very ignorant; his admiration for the Spanish system of government, profound, and his hatred of the masses, unconquerable. . . . He was small of body, had a Roman nose and little eyes. . . . He could have been easily mistaken for a ticket taker at the door of a theater.[133]

Paredes' wife, Doña Josefa Cortés de Paredes, was from a wealthy family from Guadalajara. She was reserved and of distinguished appearance, better educated than her husband, intolerant, and a strong Catholic. It was her opinion that "Satan's kingdom was daily being expanded by the liberals."[134] She, therefore, aided and abetted her husband in his schemes.

President Herrera, answering the proclamation of December 14, in *El Diario del Gobierno,* branded Paredes' disloyalty and disobedience to orders as a traitorous and criminal act.[135] Minister of War Anaya sent a circular order to all departments and garrisons not to support Paredes, who had wantonly rebelled against his government and who, instead of using his weapons to defend his country as directed, had "turned his arms against his own people."[136] The Supreme Court, the Congress, and the majority of the departmental assemblies and governors continued to support President Herrera and refused to adhere to the iniquitous plan of Paredes in spite of its depicted benefits. *El Siglo XIX* deplored the unrestrained newspaper attacks on the administration and editorialized that

> . . . there are many papers which daily violate the laws of freedom of the press. The impudence with which they predict sedition, the insolence with

---

[132] *Ibid.*, 399. Paredes failed to specify just why he had seen fit not to march against the prospective enemy in the light of his own admission that it was urgently necessary. Antonio Gibaja y Patrón, *Comentario á las revoluciones sociales de México,* III, 307–308.

[133] Prieto, *op. cit.*, 177.

[134] *Ibid.*, 179.

[135] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 546.

[136] *Ibid.*, 547.

which they attack the government, which does nothing to prosecute the writers, is most shameful.[137]

On December 20, this same newspaper published the "Pronunciamiento del General Paredes" and added that with it came

> . . . the threat of a new dictatorship and a disastrous civil war. . . . Each Mexican should give this deploroble situation serious thought, for his decision will decide not only his own fate but that of the honor and future of Mexico.[138]

The following day it was reported that General Arista again had requested aid from Paredes and that the situation on the frontier was becoming more threatening each day. "What will the *norteamericanos* say when they know about the movement in San Luis?" "What a page for history!"[139]

On December 22, President Herrera issued a manifesto stating the reasons for the administration's moderate policy. He said that he had endeavored to make an honorable settlement with the United States in order to keep Mexico from becoming involved in a disastrous war which she was not prepared to wage. The Herrera government had tried to unite all parties and the entire population, without showing any favoritism, in an effort to forge a strong, united nation.[140]

In the meantime, Paredes had directed a march on the capital. He arrived at the little village of Huehuetoca, about eleven leagues from the city, and laid his plans for seizing the government.[141] When Congress learned of his approach, full military powers were granted to President Herrera, and Bustamante was placed in charge of local defenses.[142] Mexico City was declared to be in a state of siege on the 25th of December, and preparations were made to resist the rebels. Paredes knew that he must have aid from inside the city if he were to take it. He sent, therefore, Generals Tornel and Almonte to confer with General Valenciá, president of the Council of State and commander of the forces of the strongly fortified Ciudadela. Valencia at first held out for federalism, but, finally, he agreed to accept Paredes' plan with slight modifications. Tornel and Almonte then hurried to report to Paredes the success of their mission and to say that Valencia would turn over the Ciudadela to the conspirators.[143] Congress went about its business as usual, installing new officers on the twenty-eighth. On the same day, *El Siglo XIX* protested the unreasonable situation in which the nation "found itself at the mercy of five or six thousand seditious soldiers."[144]

---

[137] *El Siglo XIX*, December 17, 1845.

[138] *Ibid.*, December 20, 1845.

[139] *Ibid.*, December 21, 1845. Carlos Pereyra, in his *Tejas, la primera desmembración de México*, 228–229, states that Arista had made a "pact of honor" with Paredes not to place "his sword or forces at the disposal of any political faction while danger threatened in the North." Paredes apparently agreed to the pact, only to violate it and "his honor" soon thereafter.

[140] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 548.

[141] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XII, 400.

[142] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 547; Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, II, 724; *Gómez Farías Papers*, Folder 10, probably December 22, 1845. People of the capital ask to be armed.

The fifth column delivered the death blow to the Herrera government on the morning of December 30, 1845. At dawn, a shot and the roll of drums, announcing the adherence of the garrison to the *Plan de San Luis Potosí*, were heard in the Ciudadela. These subversive activities were led by Generals Almonte, Valencià, and Ampudia.[145] Battalion Number Four of the Palace Guard had also been undermined. With the disaffection of these forces, President Herrera had no troops with which to repress the mutineers. Only the boys of the *Colegio Militar* could be depended upon to fight the revolutionists.[146] Rather than plunge his people into a bloody civil war in the face of an imminent foreign invasion, President Herrera elected to resign his office. He sent his resignation to Congress, along with all his official correspondence and papers. His last effort was an attempt to prevent Valencia from taking over the executive power and to urge Congress to observe the Constitution as long as possible. On December 31, Herrera issued a final statement to the nation. In it, he reviewed the course of his administration and stated that he had resigned rather than involve the country in a civil war which would result in a "useless waste of Mexican blood and would compromise the fortunes of my fellow citizens." He protested all acts of violence as a means of effecting a change of government. The president concluded with the statement that

---

[143] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 550. It has been claimed that even Gómez Farías encouraged Paredes to revolt under the monarchist banner in order that the federalists would not be charged with the war that Gómez Farías now felt was inevitable and with the loss of territory which would undoubtedly follow. Gibaja y Patrón, *Comentarios á las revoluciones de México*, III, 332.

[144] *El Siglo XIX*, December 28, 1845.

[145] "The strongest evidence of the purity of Herrera's conduct in this case, is the fact that the pronunciamento against him was purely military" and never gained widespread popular support.—Fayette Robinson, *Mexico and Her Military Chieftains*, 282–283.

[146] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 550.

> . . . the consequences of this civil war will not fall upon my government, whose conduct has done nothing to provoke it, and the nation will judge with impartiality your fellow citizen.[147]

That afternoon, the last day in the year, Mexico's hopes for peace departed as President Herrera, his ministers, and a few friends drove out of the capital in a carriage. Herrera retired to his home at No. 3, Academia de San Carlos. When Paredes tried to win his support by asking him later to second the plan, Herrera indignantly refused to have any part in his unconstitutional and treasonous acts.

Even Slidell, who had done nothing to strengthen Herrera's position, spoke well of the Mexican president in his dispatches.

> He [Herrera] is universally admitted to be a man of probity and the persons immediately about him are said to be free from any antecedent stain of that corruption, which unfortunately is the almost invariable characteristic of public men in Mexico. He has endeavored to conduct the Government purely, and to correct some of the gross abuses which have existed in every branch of the public service; this has, of course, enlisted against him, the host of officeholders throughout the country, and he has not shown that energy which was necessary to carry his good intentions into effect.[148]

Following the revolt in the capital, Slidell left the city for Vera Cruz, where he remained for several months observing events before sailing for the United States.

It is of some interest to note that the press carried very brief notices that Herrera had relinquished the presidency. On December 30, *El Siglo XIX* carried a short article on its fourth page entitled "The Final Hour" telling about the pronouncement of the Ciudadela and reporting that on the following day President Herrera would send his resignation to Congress. The front page was half taken up with a continued novel, "The Mysteries of Paris," which seemed to attract greater attention and interest than a mere change of administration. The mystery of Mexico was why a few wilful men could overthrow constitutional government and lead the nation into an unfortunate foreign war which might have been avoided.

The historian and genealogist, Ricardo Ortega, has thus commented on the first administration of President Herrera:

> Now that the passions of the day have cooled and the intense feelings of the period have died, one can do no less than pay tribute to the administration of Herrera, one of the most intelligent and patriotic that Mexico has had; he abandoned completely the course previously followed and proposed to pursue a policy which until then had been considered treasonous to the Nation.[149]

---

[147] *El Siglo XIX*, December 31, 1845.

[148] Letter of John Slidell to James Buchanan, December 27, 1845, quoted in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, VI, 93–94.

[149] Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," 40–41, in his *Historia genealógica*, II.

A similar appraisal was made by the American author, Fayette Robinson, who has written:

> The government of Herrera was, no doubt, correct, and seemed calculated to advance the great interests of the country. There is little doubt that he foresaw the consequences which were likely to result to Mexico from a war with the United States, and sought by conciliatory means to avert it.[150]

A politician would have gone the way of least resistance, but only a statesman would have pursued Herrera's course of action in the face of such odds.

Succeeding events were to prove the wisdom of Herrera's course of action. If any valid criticism could be made against him, it was that he did not use a firm hand and that he lacked the type of dynamic personality necessary under the circumstances surrounding his term of office. His splendid qualities of character as a citizen and as a public servant were not enough to save Mexico from herself. As Rivera Cambas has said, "during this troublesome period, it would have taken a genius to save the Republic."[151] Herrera was no genius but had he been free to carry his policies into effect, Mexico might have been spared invasion and devastation, and the loss of lives and of great territories. At least, he had saved his country from foolish fratricide by unselfishly renouncing the presidency.

---

[150] Fayette Robinson, *Mexico and Her Military Chieftains*, 282.

[151] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 707.

CHAPTER VII

Herrera During the War Years, 1846–1848

Two days after Herrera had resigned the presidency and retired to his home, General Paredes entered Mexico City. On the same day, January 2, Paredes called a council of all the generals and chiefs in the city to obtain their support of his plan. All acquiesced, with the exceptions of Generals Alcorta and Miñón. Of course, efforts by Paredes to secure Herrera's adherence met with a categorical refusal. On January 3, a *junta de representantes* illegally declared Paredes to be the new president. Far from strengthening the executive branch of government, the advent of Paredes to power resulted in administrative chaos which was evidenced by the fact that there were four changes in the presidency within the next nine months and eight within the next two years. After a term of office of approximately six months, Paredes resigned the presidency, under pressure from the federalists, in favor of Nicolás Bravo, who held the office for six days. Mariano Salas then briefly occupied the presidential chair, only to be succeeded by the liberal, Valentín Gómez Farías, in August, 1846. With the return of Santa Anna to Mexico in September, Farías relinquished the presidency to him and assumed the vice-presidency for himself.

No one felt that peace could be maintained after Herrera had been forced from office. President Polk commented on this change in the Mexican government as follows:

> This event has procrastinated, and may possibly defeat, the settlement of the differences between the United States and that country.[1]

Paredes had loudly claimed that he would drive the troops under Taylor across the Sabine, but he made little effort to do so and remained near the capital for fear that a revolution might unseat him. In fact, he had never been as much concerned about Texas and the United States' annexation of that province as he had with obtaining control of the Mexican government. Waddy Thompson has stated:

> The real cause of the last revolution was not, as was professed, because the government of Herrera was opposed to invading Texas, but because Paredes very much preferred to such an invasion to return to Mexico and achieve a much easier and more bloodless triumph over his own government.[2]

---

[1] *Messages and Papers of the Presidents,* V, p. 2277. Speech of President Polk to the United States Senate on March 24, 1846.

[2] Thompson, *Recollections of Mexico,* 246.

Relations with the United States were rapidly approaching a crisis. Slidell had remained in Mexico after the overthrow of Herrera to observe the course of events, although he had no hope of being received by Paredes, who had so strenuously objected to his reception by the preceding régime. In early March, Slidell was advised by the Minister of Foreign Relations that the Council of Government had finally expressed its opinion that he should not be received as a minister plenipotentiary.[3] This came as no surprise, and Slidell, accordingly, asked for his passport on March 21, 1846. One week later General Taylor moved with his forces from Corpus Christi to the Rio Grande, opposite Matamoros. There was an exchange of correspondence between General Ampudia, who commanded the garrison at Matamoros, and General Taylor in which Ampudia asked that Taylor retire with his troops beyond the Nueces. General Taylor replied that his orders did not permit such a move but that he would do everything possible to avoid any act of hostility in an effort to preserve peace.[4] These efforts proved to be of little avail since General Arista arrived in Matamoros on April 24, with orders to attack the Americans. The following day Arista ordered General Torrejón with 1,600 cavalry to cross the river. A company of United States dragoons was encountered, and a skirmish ensued in which several of the dragoons were killed and the remainder surrendered. When news of this unfortunate event reached Washington, Polk sent his war message to Congress, saying that "American blood has been shed on American soil" and that a state of war existed by act of Mexico. It was no consolation to speculate that if American troops had remained north of the Nueces and Mexican forces had not gone beyond the Rio Grande, with the intervening territory considered a neutral zone while negotiations were pending, peace might have been maintained. It was now too late for diplomacy; war was at hand.

It would serve no useful purpose to discuss the military campaigns of the next eighteen months, and they are mentioned only in relation to the activities of General Herrera during this period. Fortunately, the war "was too one-sided to be very long drawn out." The first real engagement was fought at Palo Alto, May 8, 1846; and, with General Scott's entrance into Mexico City on September 14, 1847, after the brilliant capture of the heights of Chapultepec, the fighting was virtually over.[5]

---

[3] Álvarez, *Estudios sobre la historia general de México*, V, 274.

[4] Letter of General Ampudia to General Taylor, April 12, 1846, and the reply of General Taylor to General Ampudia of the same date, quoted in Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX*, Tomo 24, pp. 11–14.

[5] G. H. Stuart, *Latin America and the United States*, 130.

Although temporarily eclipsed, General Herrera continued to occupy an important place in the Mexican scene. Refusing to support Paredes, he did not adopt the rôle of a "Hector sulking in his tent," but offered his services in the national war effort. In April, 1846, General Juan Álvarez proposed that the weak administration of Paredes be replaced by a triumvirate composed of Generals Herrera, Santa Anna, and Rincón, until a new president could be elected.[6] The revolution which was to have initiated the execution of this plan never came off, because the leaders of the movement disagreed. When more "formal elections" were held in June, Paredes received fifty-seven votes to retain the presidency, Bravo received thirteen, Herrera seven, and Rincón one.[7] However, Paredes' power was on the wane. His monarchist plans could not be carried out, and when the army began to call for a return of its hero, Santa Anna, who was still in exile in Havana, Paredes decided to give up his office to Nicolás Bravo on July 28, 1846.[8] Within a week, the presidency had passed to Mariano Salas who held office until an insurrection by General Álvarez in August brought the return of Gómez Farías as president.

The war had at least brought some unity within the ranks of the liberal party. Farías decided on a bold course of action. He would bring back Santa Anna, who, he felt, was Mexico's ablest general, and while Santa Anna was fighting the Americans in the field, Farías and the *puros* would finance the war by confiscating certain properties of the church. The difficulty was in getting Santa Anna through the American blockade. This problem was solved more easily than could have been imagined. Santa Anna sent an agent to President Polk saying that if he were allowed to return to Mexico, he would make peace with the United States on favorable terms. He also stated that Mexico needed to be intimidated by an invasion and went so far as to draw up a plan of operation for the United States forces to follow. Polk was taken in by the scheme and ordered that Santa Anna be given ten thousand dollars to facilitate his plan and a safe conduct through the American squadron off Vera Cruz. He subsequently landed at that port in late August, and, in September, arrived in Mexico City. Gómez Farías suggested that Santa Anna go immediately to San Luis Potosí to organize an army. While he was in that city, an agreeable Congress named him acting president and Farías as vice-president. They were constitutionally confirmed in these offices by the election of December 24, 1846. It is interesting to note that Herrera was given casual consideration for the vice-presidency at that time.[9]

---

[6] Letter of John Black to James Buchanan, April 26, 1846, quoted in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, Vol. 4, pp. 75–76.

[7] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 732.

[8] Baronesa de Wilson, *op. cit.*, II, 128.

During these months, Herrera took no active part in military affairs. This was partly because Paredes was in power and also because Herrera had opposed the war and had endeavored to keep peace with the United States during his previous administration. In the eyes of many of the army leaders, this well-known attitude disqualified him for holding any major field command; although had he been given such an assignment, he would undoubtedly have discharged his duty with patriotic fidelity, as proved by succeeding events. When the congressional elections were held in 1846, General Herrera was elected to his third term of office as a deputy from Vera Cruz.[10] He had previously sat in the Chamber of Deputies in 1822 and 1828. Other representatives from Vera Cruz included José Gutiérrez Zamora, Antonio María Salonio, Bernardo Couto, and Martino Jáuregui. Herrera and Couto, particularly, were considered too moderate and too much disposed toward peace to suit some of their more radical colleagues. A friend of Gómez Farías wrote to him as follows in this regard:

> The deputation from Veracruz is going to be the burden of Congress. . . . It is made up, for the most part, of the most backward reactionaries. Look at their names and then you will understand the extent of the perplexity and confusion with which I returned here.[11]

Herrera's work in the Chamber of Deputies was concerned chiefly with committees on military affairs where his long experience in these matters and his knowledge gained as Minister of War on three previous occasions proved most valuable. Probably the most important measure passed by Congress during Herrera's term as deputy was that which restored the Constitution of 1824. Herrera voted affirmatively on the bill, which became a law on February 10, 1847.[12] In the spring of 1847, Herrera became president of the Congress.[13] As president, he promulgated thirty supplementary articles of reform, which included a sort of bill of rights, on May 21, 1847. On this occasion, Congress met in the Hall of Sessions, with Herrera seated in the center of the platform; on his right was President Santa Anna, and on his left sat the President of the Supreme Court, Juan N. Gómez Navarette.[14] All present took an oath to uphold the constitution and these supplementary articles.

---

[9] Letter of J. Del Raso to Gómez Farías, November 15, 1846, in the *Gómez Farías Papers,* Folder 13.

[10] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524.

[11] Letter of José de Arrillaga to Valentín Gómez Farías, Jalapa, November 2, 1846, in the *Gómez Farías Papers,* Folder 13.

[12] Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.,* V, 257.

[13] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* III, 919.

[14] *Ibid.*

Speaking to Congress at this time, Herrera stated that the government was faced with the double duty of successfully prosecuting the "most just of all wars" and of giving "definite form to our political organization."[15] He praised the federative principle and said that "today the states have received the solemn declaration that their rights have been restored to them." It is now their duty, he said, to uphold and maintain the public liberties and institutions entrusted to their keeping and to support above all the constitution and the federal government. In federation, he declared, there is strength. "A federation saved the Greeks; another liberated the Low Countries." The federative principle, Herrera stated, "makes of each state, a center of action and of power. It is just as advantageous to internal security as to external defense." Under such a system, "a people can never be defeated by a single blow."[16] Herrera added that it gave him great pleasure to announce to the Mexican people the return of the Constitution of 1824,

> with its indispensable guarantees of freedom, justice, and stability, with all its glorious memories, and all the prestige of its legitimacy.

He concluded by saying that if all people would lay aside their differences on the altar of harmony and all parties would respect and support the prevailing system of government, Mexico might be saved by the awakening of an invincible spirit like that of the glorious days of independence.[17]

With the return of Santa Anna to Mexico, a new feeling of unity developed, and a truce was declared by the various political parties in an effort to save national independence. Instead of arranging for the surrender of Mexico as he had promised Polk, Santa Anna was made commander-in-chief of the army on September 17, 1846. By January he had raised an army of twenty-five thousand men and had headed north to intercept the forces of General Taylor. Santa Anna and Herrera laid aside their personal differences in the interest of national defense and worked in close coöperation throughout the war. On May 4, 1847, while still president of the Congress, Herrera was attached to the *estado mayor,* or general staff, by order of Santa Anna.[18] The general staff was composed of the most experienced and highest ranking officers, whose duty it was to do the operational planning for the armies in the field. Herrera's appointment to the staff was fitting recognition of his long military service, his rank as general of division, and his unsurpassed experience in military affairs. He remained on the *estado mayor* until the end of the war.

---

[15] "El General D. José Joaquín de Herrera, presidente del congreso, al jurarse la acta de reformas y la constitución federal, en 21 de mayo de 1847," in *Informes y manifiestos,* I, 333.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Expediente de Herrera,* III, Doc. 734.

Meanwhile, General Taylor had moved southward from Monterrey and had taken Saltillo in January, 1847. On January 28, Santa Anna moved northward from San Luis Potosí to intercept the American forces. Skirmishes began on February 21, and on the twenty-second and twenty-third, the Mexicans attacked in the battle of Buena Vista. Troops on both sides fought with unusual bravery. In the early stages of the battle, Santa Anna showed superior generalship, but this was offset by the devastating marksmanship of the American gunners and riflemen. Neither side actually won the encounter, but victory was claimed by both Taylor and Santa Anna. The day following the battle, Santa Anna retreated with his forces since he had been advised of a revolt of students, called *polkos*, in the capital, and he had decided to return to Mexico City to put down the uprising. Also, Gómez Farías and the radical liberals were experiencing difficulties with the clergy, due to forced loans levied on the church and the passage of a measure that provided for the confiscation of five million pesos of church property. Bearing several American standards which he had captured, Santa Anna was welcomed along the way and in the capital as a conquering hero. He quickly put down the revolt of the *polkos* and decided to placate the clergy by removing Gómez Farías, as he had done before in 1834. In April, while Santa Anna was fighting in the field, he left General Pedro Anaya as acting president.

A change in tactics on the part of the Americans took Santa Anna southward toward Vera Cruz. General Winfield Scott had landed in March with an army of over 12,000 men and, after capturing Vera Cruz, was heading inland against the capital. In an effort to stem this new advance, Santa Anna met the Americans at Cerro Gordo below Jalapa in a terrific battle on April 17 and 18. By frontal assault and a surprise flanking movement, the Americans won a decisive victory, capturing many Mexican officers and three thousand men.[19] Most of these prisoners were paroled since

---

[19] Fayette Robinson, a contemporary writer on the Mexican War, in his *Mexico and Her Military Chieftains*, pp. 282–283, states: ". . . Herrera was excluded from military command until the last struggle of the president at Cerro Gordo, when, with La Vega, and the best men of the Mexican army, he was taken prisoner in the entrenchments from which Santa Anna fled. He was then paroled by General Scott and returned to the capital. His military

General Scott had no facilities for housing or feeding the captives. Santa Anna fled to Orizaba while the invaders pressed on to Puebla, which was occupied on the fifteenth of May. By August, Scott's forces were before Mexico City itself.

After three weeks of fighting, during which the Americans captured Contreras and Churubusco, on the outskirts of the capital, General Scott arranged an armistice with Santa Anna in the hope that peace might be obtained. Observing that the tide of battle was running against the Mexicans, President Polk had dispatched Nicholas B. Trist, new chief clerk of the State Department, to Scott's headquarters to negotiate with the Mexicans. It was felt that the Mexicans would prefer an amicable settlement of differences to the occupation of their capital. After an initial difference of opinion between Scott and Trist as to the latter's powers, Trist informed the Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs on August 25 that he had been empowered by the President of the United States to negotiate a durable peace with a commissioner or commissioners appointed by the Mexican government. On the twenty-sixth, he was advised that persons would be appointed "to hear propositions looking to peace," and that he would be met by them at 4 p. m. the twenty-seventh, at the town of Atzcapotzalco, intermediate to the two armies.[20]

On August 27, Santa Anna met with his cabinet and appointed as commissioners General Herrera, Antonio Fernández Monjardín, and Antonio Garay. All three asked to be relieved of this duty. Herrera's request was refused while the other two resignations were accepted. The commission was finally composed of General Herrera, Bernardo Couto, General Mora y Villamíl, and Miguel Atristaín, with Miguel Arroyo as secretary. Bancroft comments on Herrera's appointment to this difficult post as follows:

> . . . [Herrera was chosen] for his prominence as late president and chief of the peace party, one whose influence would sustain Santa Anna's attitude, and divide the brunt of the responsibility.[21]

---

career is therefore over, but it is not unlikely he may yet be called to serve Mexico in some civil capacity."

However, there is some doubt whether he was either present, or taken prisoner at Cerro Gordo. At this time he was a member of the Chamber of Deputies and president of the Congress. A study of the accounts of the battle of Cerro Gordo by Negrete, Riva Palacio, Rivera Cambas, Justin H. Smith, Bancroft, Generals C. M. Wilcox and Winfield Scott has not shown that he was present or that he was taken prisoner. A General Jarrero was listed, however, as being taken prisoner with General La Vega.

[20] C. M. Wilcox, *History of the Mexican War*, 415.

[21] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 492.

The Mexican commissioners represented the *moderado* party viewpoint, which made their task both ungracious and difficult since the *moderados* had been defeated on the issue of peace in 1845.

> General Herrera, head of the commission, had been driven from the presidency by Paredes, because he was disposed to acknowledge the independence of Texas. Chief of a party known at the time to be favorable to peace, respected for his integrity and his many virtues, his appointment imparted to the negotiations about to be attempted on the part of Mexico a certain respectability; but he was admitted by Mexican authorities to be not well versed in international rights or law.[22]

Bernardo Couto was an able lawyer and an accomplished scholar. He was well informed on civil and constitutional law. Notes and documents drawn by him attest to his learning and patriotism. Mora y Villamíl held military and political prominence. Skilled as an engineer, he was able to discuss limits and boundaries. Señor Atristaín was noted for his financial ability, but it was claimed that he was an agent of an English banking house which was most influential in Mexican governmental affairs and which was much interested in the outcome of the peace proceedings.[23]

Before the peace commissioners had held their first meeting, an incident occurred that might well have brought a renewal of hostilities except for the personal gallant intervention of General Herrera, recently appointed commandant-general of Mexico. More than a hundred wagons of the American army had been sent into Mexico City to obtain supplies and money from foreign houses, as allowed by article seven of the armistice terms. In the Calle de Plateros the drivers were set upon by a mob, including women, which showered them with stones. One teamster was run over by his own wagon. The governor of the federal district, General Tornel, called out troops to dispel the rioters, but this only increased their fury.

> Neither appeals nor threats of force had any effect, and it was not until General Herrera appeared on the streets and spoke to the people, telling them that on the field of battle they should be valiant and fight, but never assault unarmed men, that quiet was restored.[24]

The wagons returned later and received their loads. An apology was offered for this infraction of the armistice and was accepted by General Scott, who chose to disregard the incident. The action taken by Commandant-General Herrera on this occasion indicates not only his high principles but the respect and regard which the Mexicans had for him.

---

[22] Wilcox, *op. cit.*, 415.

[23] *Ibid.*, 416.

[24] *Ibid.*, 417; a description of this episode is given in a diary of a Mexican soldier which is quoted in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, Vol. 19, p. 561. The soldier relates that General Herrera "threw himself into the midst of the disturbance, reprimanding the people, and controlled the disorder immediately."

On the afternoon of August 27, the commissioners met at Atzcapotzalco as agreed. Mr. Trist had been given full powers, while those of the Mexican delegates were limited to receiving propositions from the United States commissioner, if drawn up, or to making memoranda of them if made orally. Herrera explained that when the time for actually treating came, the commissioners would present their full powers. Mr. Trist then submitted a *projet* of a treaty which would have given the United States practically the boundary that she later obtained in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This included Texas, with the Rio Grande as its southern boundary, New Mexico, and Upper California. Trist also proposed to assume the claims of United States citizens against the Mexican government and to pay a sum of money for New Mexico and California, which would be increased if transit rights could be obtained across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. These, in general, were the terms, which were promptly refused by the Mexican government.

Herrera and the other commissioners were instructed to ask Trist to declare the motives of the war, the ends proposed, whether he considered that Texas came into the United States by annexation or purchase, and whether the pretensions of the United States were not founded solely on force. The Mexican government also declared that it could recognize no transfer of territory other than the province of Texas. Obviously, the outlook for peace was unpromising.

Full instructions were given the Mexican commissioners on August 31, which they were not to exceed or disregard without previous authority from the Mexican government. These restrictions so limited the commission's powers and so embarrassed their chances of success, regardless of how skilful they might be, that they requested to be relieved of their onerous duties.[25] After a long conference with the president, resulting in a resolution of the council of ministers, their instructions were amplified in this sense:

> That you approximate to them as much as possible, agreeing to some modifications, which the circumstances of the country may exact as well as to things of minor importance which may arise during the discussion. . . . In a word, the supreme government has chosen you, as the nation has frequently done, aware of your distinction and patriotism, and has confided to your hands the honor and interests of the country.[26]

The third meeting of the commissioners was held on September 1, at the house of a Señor Alfaro near the city. As a result of this conference, the commissioners, headed by Herrera, reported that it was their belief that Trist was disposed to abandon his pretensions to Lower and part of Upper California and that he was willing to refer the matter of the land between the Rio Grande and the Nueces to his government for consideration. Trist insisted, however, that New Mexico was a *sine qua non* of peace. This rather confusing report to the Mexican president and his cabinet brought much discussion and showed wide divergence of opinions. Some favored acceptance, some wanted further negotiation, and some clamored for a continuance of the war. Herrera urged caution and suggested that these serious matters of war and peace be placed in the hands of a *junta* of learned and distinguished men, but this proposal was opposed by Santa Anna.[27]

---

[25] Wilcox, *op. cit.*, 418; Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, III, 945–946.

[26] Resolution of the council of ministers, August 31, 1847, quoted in Wilcox, *op. cit.*, 418.

On September 5, the Herrera peace commission was advised by the Mexican government that it would not consent to a prolongation of the armistice nor would it agree to the cession of New Mexico. The note to the commissioners concluded with: ". . . In New Mexico and in a few leagues which intervene between the right of the Nueces and the left of the Rio Grande, is peace or war."[28]

Needless to say, this left the Mexican commissioners with small hope of reaching a satisfactory agreement with Trist. However, they submitted a counter-proposal, or treaty, on September 6, which briefly stated that Mexico would relinquish Texas to the Nueces but not the Rio Grande since the intervening territory "has never belonged to the State of Texas." Mexico, however, agreed not to make any settlements in that area. Cession of New Mexico was refused as was Lower California and a part of Upper California. The northern part of Upper California, it was intimated, might be purchased, but transit rights across Tehuantepec were refused on the grounds that they had already been conferred on English subjects.[29]

Trist did not have an opportunity to reply to this proposal, since the armistice was abruptly terminated by General Scott, who charged that Santa Anna had violated the terms of the truce by improving his fortifications. The Mexicans made countercharges of a similar nature, and each side feared the other would gain some advantage by any further delays. Fighting began again on September 8, and the work of the Mexican commissioners and Trist was temporarily brought to a halt. Peace, however, could not long be denied under the circumstances. Herrera and the other members of the commission only hoped that a satisfactory basis for peace might be worked out in order to spare the capital from the ravages of war.

---

[27] Wilcox, *op. cit.*, 419.

[28] *Ibid.*, 420.

[29] The complete proposal, dated September 6, 1847, appears in Wilcox, *op. cit.*, 421–423. It is signed by José Joaquín de Herrera, Bernardo Couto, Ignacio Mora y Villamíl, and Miguel Atristaín.

With the renewal of hostilities, Herrera, as commandant-general of Mexico, ordered the partial evacuation of the capital in preparation for an attack. Women, children, and foreigners were ordered to leave the city, and General Herrera asked a priest to save the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe if the capital were taken.[30] Herrera gave the order of evacuation on September 7, and on the same day Santa Anna issued a decree to the effect that, if he were killed or captured, the senior member of the Supreme Court, Peña y Peña, and Generals Herrera and Bravo should jointly take over the executive power. This disposition was to be effective until Congress could assemble and make other arrangements.[31] A few days later, Bravo was captured at the battle of Chapultepec, whereupon Santa Anna assigned his place in the triumvirate to General Alcorta.

American victories at Molino del Rey and Chapultepec during the week of September 7 to 13 opened the way for their entrance into the capital. The fighting was bitter, and the Mexicans defended every inch of ground. On the night of September 13, Santa Anna decided that the Mexican troops should evacuate the city. The troops were demoralized, and such a large quantity of arms and artillery had been lost as to make a continuation of the struggle for the city inadvisable.[32] Between eight and nine o'clock Don Trigueros called at the Citadel and took General Santa Anna to the villa of Guadalupe, where the troops were directed to rendezvous. Early in the morning of September 14, American troops marched into the plaza in front of the National Palace, and a few minutes later the troops applauded the arrival of General Scott on horseback. The Mexicans watched the surrender proceedings with curiosity and no apparent hostility, but when the American troops dispersed to their quarters, hidden riflemen opened fire, and stones were thrown from the housetops. After two days of intermittent street fighting, order was finally restored through the efforts of the *ayuntamiento* and Scott's patrols.

On September 16, Santa Anna conferred with General Herrera at Guadalupe and outlined a plan of action. Santa Anna was to take the cavalry and four light pieces and with the forces of

---

[30] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* III, 948.

[31] Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 527 footnote.

[32] Wilcox, *op. cit.,* 481.

General Rea, he hoped to capture Scott's garrison at Puebla and thereby cut him off from the coast and his base of supplies. General Herrera was given command of the greater part of the artillery, the infantry, and the supply trains and was to march to Querétaro.[33] Confusion and conflicting orders marked succeeding events. Herrera set out for Querétaro as planned; but Santa Anna, hearing that there was strong opposition to the American troops in the capital, had fleeting hopes of saving the city and ordered Herrera to countermarch to its relief. Varying reports that he received as to conditions in Mexico City caused Santa Anna to change his orders to Herrera several times. It was only 140 miles from the capital to Querétaro, but Herrera's troops

> had marched and countermarched so much between Cuahtitlán and the capital that they were not only much fatigued, but greatly unnerved, and their morale at the time being not of the best, desertions increased to the extent that corps hitherto of unquestioned loyalty and courage became infected. Deficient in transportations, scant in funds, and with a badly organized commissariat, there was much straggling, and pillaging could not be restrained.[34]

Before departing for Puebla, Santa Anna also resigned the presidency and supreme command of the army. The president of the Supreme Court, Manuel de la Peña y Peña, then assumed the presidency, as prescribed by law. He refused to recognize the triumvirate plan previously proposed by Santa Anna, saying that it was unconstitutional. In this view he was supported by General Herrera. Additional confusion resulted, due to the fact that Santa Anna had designated Herrera as second in command, while on September 29, Provisional President Peña y Peña appointed Herrera as commander-in-chief of the army.[35]

In Querétaro, Herrera was having a difficult time. Requests for money to pay officers and men who had received no pay for many weeks and for supplies went unheeded.[36] The surrounding country had been stripped, and the sufferings of his troops increased daily, rather than diminished. It was almost impossible to keep order, and stringent efforts to prevent insubordination, desertion, and robbery were unheeded by the desperate men.

> The prestige of the ex-President availed little, though he exerted himself to obtain subsistence for his destitute soldiers in the manner least burthen-

---

[33] *Ibid.*, 485; *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524; Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* III, 953.

[34] Wilcox, *op. cit.*, 491.

[35] *Justin H. Smith Papers,* Vol. 19, pp. 36–37; 561.

[36] *Ibid.*, 611.

some to citizens, who gave reluctantly and only under the fear of more serious and onerous exactions.[37]

During October, General Herrera requested that he be relieved of his command and be granted retirement from the army.[38] This step was taken not only because he had not received any assistance from the government but also because Herrera was in very poor health. Peña y Peña, however, refused to accept his resignation. Instead, the provisional president offered Herrera the post of Minister of War in his cabinet. Herrera replied to Peña y Peña on October 20, thanking him for this consideration but refusing to accept appointment on the plea of illness.[39] Herrera commented that he and the president held similar political views and that:

> . . . it is highly gratifying to me that you have been elevated to this high post, which I believe is favorable and necessary to the welfare of the Republic.[40]

Peña y Peña wrote to Herrera on the same day and said he regretted that Herrera would be unable to accept the cabinet post owing to his "serious illness." He added, however, that he hoped to have "the benefit of Herrera's counsel" from time to time.[41] Unfortunately, Herrera's health did not improve. The strain of the last few months, long marches, and the lack of proper food and sufficient sleep had aggravated a stomach and liver disorder from which General Herrera had suffered for many years. He finally obtained a leave of absence on November 11, 1847, which granted him two months to recover his strength in Michoacán.[42] Herrera, rapidly becoming worse, was unable to leave the city. In fact, he was so ill on the night of November 22 that "he received the *sagrado viático* from the archbishop of Mexico at seven o'clock."[43] Almost miraculously Herrera recovered after several months of careful attention and rest. To the great benefit of the nation, he was eventually able to resume his duties, which were to include those of great responsibility as Mexico's reconstruction president from 1848 to 1851. During December and January, he again endeavored to retire from the army, but each time his request was refused.[44]

---

[37] Wilcox, *op. cit.*, 492; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 700 for details of administrative problems at Querétaro.

[38] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 700–703.

[39] *Expediente de Herrera*, III, Doc. 735.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] *Expediente de Herrera*, III, Doc. 736.

[42] *Expediente de Herrera*, III, Doc. 737.

[43] *Ibid.*, Doc. 739.

[44] *Ibid.*, Docs. 738, 742, and 744. Herrera wanted to make sure, however, that retirement would not prevent his family from receiving his *montepío* pension when he died.

Meanwhile in the Mexican capital, there was no government other than that of the occupational forces of General Scott. The Mexican government had moved to Querétaro along with Herrera's troops. For some time there was only one cabinet minister, former secretary of internal and foreign affairs, Luis de la Rosa, who now held all four of the secretaryships.[45] On November 9, 1847, Peña y Peña was replaced by Pedro M. Anaya as *ad interim* president.[46] Peña y Peña, in an effort to conclude a treaty of peace with the United States, then took the post of Minister of Foreign Relations. In this, he was later successful. General Mora y Villamíl was appointed Minister of War by Anaya, and it was now apparent that the *moderados,* who had earlier opposed the war and now favored peace, had regained control of the government. It should be pointed out that Anaya was elected only to complete the presidential term of office which expired on January 8, 1848. However, when the eighth of January came, the nation was not yet ready to hold national elections, and Peña y Peña again assumed the provisional presidency until Congress met in May to choose a constitutional executive.

After leaving Herrera at Guadalupe, Santa Anna had attacked Puebla with his cavalry units but was repulsed. It was his plan, supported by the *puros,* to continue the war through guerrilla fighting in order to evade recognition of defeat. However, with his defeat at Puebla, the moderates secured a majority in Congress and determined to make peace. Many of the wealthy creoles felt that guerrilla warfare would be more ruinous to them than to the Americans. In view of this change in public opinion, Santa Anna gave up the struggle and requested permission from the government in Querétaro to leave Mexico. Señora Santa Anna, preparing for another exile, packed her bags and departed from the capital in company with Señor Atristaín to join her husband in Tehuacán. There, they barely escaped capture by a band of Texas Rangers under the command of Colonel Jack Hays, who had learned of their flight. The provisional government, fearing that Santa Anna might be the source of later trouble, agreed to his departure. In March, the American authorities gave Santa Anna, "his family and personal armed retainers" a safe conduct through their lines to Vera Cruz.[47] Shortly thereafter, he and his family sailed aboard the Spanish ship, *Pepita,* for Jamaica.

By November, 1847, the Mexicans were ready to renew the peace negotiations which had been interrupted by the resumption of hostilities on September 8. The chief difficulty now was that there was no agent present legally qualified to represent the United States. Trist's powers had been revoked by the authorities in Washington in October, and he had been ordered to suspend negotiations, if any were pending, and return to the United States. Polk and the State Department were disgruntled that Trist had made a suggestion that any southern boundary, other than the Rio Grande, be considered by the United States. They further felt that Scott and Trist had been the gullible dupes of Santa Anna.

---

[45] *Secretarios de estado del gobierno de México,* 31. (Genaro García Collection manuscript.)

[46] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.,* IV, 701–702; Bancroft, *op cit.,* V, 528.

[47] Callcott, *Santa Anna,* 274.

Trist hastened to obey this order of recall, but circumstances would not permit his departure. Scott needed all the men he could muster to hold Mexico City, and he could not spare a detachment to accompany Trist to Vera Cruz. In addition, "his testimony was needed in the court-martial proceedings against General Pillow."[48] Trist also received information through Edward Thornton of the British Legation that Provisional President Peña y Peña was desirous of peace. After conferring with Scott, Trist decided to disobey his instructions to return to Washington and, in the interest of his government, to take advantage of a seemingly propitious moment which might not again present itself. It was a brave, though personally unwise and rash, decision, since carrying on negotiations with the enemy after withdrawal of powers constituted a violation of a criminal statute of the United States.

With the election of Anaya in November as *ad interim* president, the moderate liberals obtained a clear-cut majority, and formal negotiations were again undertaken.[49] Peña y Peña, known to favor peace, became Minister of Foreign Relations as already indicated. The Mexican government appointed Couto, Atristaín, and Luis G. Cuevas as peace commissioners to meet with Trist. Herrera was too ill to take part in these conferences, but two of the representatives had served on the commission that had negotiated during the armistice. The meetings were held in the village of Guadalupe Hidalgo, three miles from the City of Mexico. After many long conferences and earnest discussions, and with rumors of *pronunciamientos* in distant states, a treaty of peace, friendship, and limits between Mexico and the United States was made and signed on February 2, 1848. Major-General William Butler agreed to a suspension of hostilities of two months and both parties agreed that four months should be allowed for ratification of the treaty.[50]

The terms of the treaty and the boundary line established were in accordance with the *projet* and instructions which Trist had received a year earlier. The United States obtained New Mexico and Upper California, the boundary line running up the middle of the Rio Grande to the southern boundary of New Mexico, thence westerly along that boundary to its western termination, thence northward to the first branch of the Gila River, and finally down the middle of that branch to the Rio Colorado, along the division line between Upper and Lower California to the Pacific. Mexico was to receive payment of fifteen million dollars for the ceded territory, and the United States was to assume the claims of its citizens against Mexico. Mexicans residing in the ceded area were to be protected in their religion and property rights. Those who wished to do so might become American citizens with full rights and privileges. On the other hand, those who desired to live in Mexico would be repatriated at government expense. The United States also took on the obligation of restraining the Indians on the northern side of the boundary from attacking Mexican towns and villages. Lower California and the right of transit across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec were not acquired.[51]

---

[48] J. H. Latane, *A History of American Foreign Policy*, 277.

[49] Wilcox, *op. cit.*, 536.

[50] *Ibid.*

Although Trist was severely censured for disobeying instructions, the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was approved by the United States Senate with certain amendments on March 10 and signed by the president on the sixteenth of the same month.[52] It now remained to secure Mexican approval of the amended document, and the task of exchanging ratifications was entrusted to the United States commissioners, A. H. Sevier and Nathan Clifford.

When the Mexican Congress finally assembled on May 7, 1848, the two chief problems facing it were consideration of acceptance of the treaty of peace and election of a constitutional president and vice-president. Provisional President Peña y Peña spoke eloquently to Congress at its opening session in favor of the treaty.[53] He said that he felt that its terms were the best obtainable under the circumstances. Realizing that there yet remained strong opposition to the treaty in Congress, he held out the prophetic hope that the addition of slave territory to the United States might well be a cause for a future civil war. If this occurred and the southern part of the United States became an independent republic, it would be made up of whites, Negroes, Indians, and Mexicans, and it would be more likely to be friendly to Mexico than was the predominantly Anglo-Saxon population of the United States, taken as a whole, as it existed at that time.[54]

---

[51] W. M. Malloy, *Treaties and Conventions of the United States*, 1, pp. 1107–1119.

[52] *Ibid.*, 1107.

[53] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 710.

[54] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 78.

Commissioners Sevier and Clifford met with the Mexican representatives, Luis G. Cuevas, Bernardo Couto, and the foreign minister at Querétaro the latter part of May to discuss certain parts of the treaty and to clarify the meaning of the new amendments, as proposed by the United States Senate. The resulting conferences and discussions proved mutually satisfactory; and, upon the request of the Mexican commissioners, it was agreed to put in writing a statement of the discussions and explanations of various articles of the treaty. This document was drawn up on May 26 and was called the Protocol of Querétaro.[55] Unfortunately, there was later some difference of opinion as to the legal status of the protocol—the Mexicans contending that it had the same force as the treaty, while the United States maintained that it had no binding character unless ratified separately or included in the treaty. However, the Mexican Congress formally accepted the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on May 30, 1848. Action apparently had been taken the preceding day; for on the evening of the twenty-ninth, news reached Mexico City that the treaty had been ratified. Zamacois records the effects of this announcement in the capital as follows:

> On May 29, at 7:53 p. m., various bursts of light and gunfire announced to the capital of Mexico the news of the ratification of the treaty of peace. The spacious *Plaza de Armas* was literally full of North American officials who showed great joy and enthusiasm. On one of the balconies of the palace, occupied by the United States' officials, appeared an illuminated placard on which could be read the words, *Peace-Paz.* When this inscription was seen, there resounded a thousand *vivas* which increased the enthusiasm and happiness of the officials. The Mexicans took little part in this rejoicing; although they understood the necessity of arranging a peace, they could not forget that in order to attain it, they had relinquished vast and rich provinces. The war, for Mexico, was unfortunate but not dishonorable. For the United States, it was favorable but not glorious.[56]

On the same day, General Butler published orders for the evacuation of Mexico City by the North American troops. The soldiers were instructed as to how the movement was to be carried out and the strictest discipline and good conduct were ordered to be observed by the soldiers in marching from the various points of departure to the port of Vera Cruz. The United States forces were obliged to place at the disposal of the Mexican government certain supplies, artillery, tools, and public property taken in the course of the war. As evidence of good faith, the machinery of evacuation was immediately set in motion. On their part, the Mexican authorities began to make the necessary arrangements for taking over the garrisons which were still in the hands of the United States troops.

---

[55] Malloy, *op. cit.*, 1, pp. 1120–1122.

[56] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 156.

The Mexican Congress now turned its attention to the problem of providing the nation with a constitutional administration. Selection of a president who could meet the needs of national reconstruction and regeneration was truly a perplexing task. A man "of great personal prestige, impartial, and conciliatory," was needed in order to weld the various political factions together and insure stability.[57] It was also desirable that he be a strong advocate of the peace and one in whom the government of the United States had confidence. He should, moreover, be a moderate liberal since that party controlled a majority of the seats in Congress. The new president must be one who commanded the respect of all factions, one who had always shown high purpose and ideals, and one whose reputation and character were above reproach. He must have vision and wisdom to guide Mexico through her darkest hour since becoming a republic.

On May 30, 1848, the election was held in Querétaro, and the balloting gave General José Joaquín de Herrera the vote of nine states, three to Santa Anna, two to Ángel Trias, one to Melchor Ocampo, and one to Gómez Pedraza.[58] Other candidates who received preliminary consideration were Luís G. Cuevas, José J. Pesado, José María Jiménez, and General Almonte.[59] Since Santa Anna was in exile in Jamaica, votes cast for him were declared null and void. The vote of the State of Chihuahua was also discounted for the reason that there was not a quorum of representatives from that state present.

Congress then proceeded to act on the two candidates having the greatest number of votes, Herrera and Trias, Santa Anna being disqualified. In this second balloting, General Herrera was supported by the delegations from Mexico, Michoacán, Oaxaca, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis, Tamaulipas, Vera Cruz, Jalisco, Guanajuato, and the Federal District. Trias carried Chihuahua, Durango, Tabasco, Zacatecas, and Coahuila. The result, 11 states to 5, was a clear-cut and much-deserved victory for Herrera.

When Herrera was informed of the outcome of the elections, he refused to accept the presidency, stating that since he had been in very poor health for some time, he did not feel that he was physically able to give the time and energy to the arduous tasks of administration which the duties of that high office demanded and which the people of Mexico deserved. One Mexican historian has written:

---

[57] Baronesa de Wilson, *op. cit.*, 159.

[58] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 157; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 355.

[59] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 82.

> . . . this honorable man, a stranger to ambition for power and acclaim, renounced the distinguished post with which he was honored. This surprised no one, for his proverbial modesty and disinterestedness were known throughout the nation.[60]

However, the Chamber of Deputies was inclined to press for his acceptance in spite of the fact that a few months earlier he had been so ill that he had received the Sacrament of Extreme Unction in a solemn ceremony participated in by all the officials and notables of Querétaro. On May 31, Herrera sent a formal letter to the Chamber stating his reasons for refusing to accept their decision. All business was put aside, and all working committees were adjourned while this serious matter was again debated. A resolution, "not to permit the renunciation of the office of constitutional president of the republic by citizen Herrera," was passed by a vote of eighty-one to six.[61]

It was hoped that this conclusive manifestation by the Chamber of Deputies to the effect that Herrera's services were considered indispensable to the public welfare would cause him to withdraw his resignation. Herrera, anxious to return to private life and to recuperate from his recent illness, again refused. This second refusal was considered by the Chamber in a heated session on the first of June. It was pointed out that no other candidate could command an adequate number of votes in Congress or would represent the majority opinion. It was declared that if Herrera did not accept the position of chief executive, incalculable evil would befall the nation through lack of unity and popular leadership. In an effort to solve the immediate difficulty, Deputy Manuel Payno offered the following proposal: "Let General José Joaquín de Herrera present himself to take the oath, without prejudice of which his resignation be taken into consideration later."[62] At the instance of Deputy Pacheco, a special committee was appointed to act on this proposal. Within two hours, the committee presented a resolution which read:

> . . . day after tomorrow, Sunday, at twelve noon, his Excellency Señor General Don José Joaquín de Herrera will present himself to take the oath of office as president.[63]

This resolution was promptly passed. Meanwhile, members of the committee had gone to see Herrera and plead with him in the

---

[60] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 158.

[61] *Ibid.*, 159; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 355.

[62] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 159.

[63] *Ibid.*, 160.

"*nombre de la patria*" to answer the supreme call of duty and to accept the tasks of reconstruction and regeneration of the Mexican Union.[64] General Herrera could no longer refuse the persistency of the Chamber or deny the urgency of providing Mexico with a president who enjoyed popular support. He, therefore, agreed to present himself on June 3 to take the oath of office. He replied to Congress that:

> . . . if the sacrifice I make of the last remnants of my strength would be a guarantee which would assure the benefits of peace and public order, I would make it with much pleasure to the legislative body. It would then match the confidence of the states that thought me worthy of the first office of the nation and the nomination with which the Chamber of Deputies has honored me.[65]

Zamacois further states:

> Although there were ambitious and unscrupulous politicians in Mexico who had led her down the road of revolution to the inevitable involvement of Mexico in a foreign war and the making of a costly peace, she did not lack men of high civic and moral virtues such as Herrera and Peña y Peña who deserve to rank with the finest statesmen with whom other nations are honored.[66]

For the second time in his long political and military career, Herrera had been elected constitutional president of the United States of Mexico.

---

[64] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 355.

[65] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 160.

[66] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VIII

Political and Financial Problems

General José Joaquín de Herrera took over the office of constitutional president of the Mexican Republic for the second time on June 2, 1848.[1] The former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Manuel de la Peña y Peña, who, in order to complete the peace negotiations with the United States, had served as *ad interim* president from January until May, now returned to his previous judicial post. Peña y Peña applauded the reëlection of Herrera as

> not only a testimony of the high esteem in which the Nation holds him personally but a just and speedy return to the post of Constitutional President, from which he was violently deposed in 1845.[2]

The reëlection of Herrera meant a sincere effort toward Mexico's reconstruction. It was, moreover, a vindication of Herrera's previous stand in 1845 when he, as president, had urged arbitration of problems pending with the United States and had wanted to receive John Slidell as envoy extraordinary to negotiate a settlement of the Texas question and other related difficulties. It was now apparent that, had his suggestions been heeded, the Texas question might have found an honorable and satisfactory solution without resorting to a futile conflict with its attendant greater losses in men, money, and territory. But the prophet is ever without honor in his own country. A sadder but wiser people belatedly recognized this fact and eagerly turned to the man whose wisdom had been previously rejected, to lead them from the chaos, the bitterness and the economic prostration in which the republic now found itself.

The problems facing Herrera were more than multiple. They were well nigh impossible from the standpoint of the existing state of social-economic stagnation and the machinations of opposing political groups, already in evidence before he came to the presidency. The president needed the coöperative support of all parties and all political leaders to effect Mexican regeneration and reconstruction. Sad to say, this was not to be. The Mexican historian Bancroft has written:

---

[1] *El Siglo XIX*, June 3, 1848, contained a public decree issued by the governor of the Federal District to the effect that President Herrera had taken over the powers of the Chief Executive. Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 82.

[2] *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 1848, p. 353.

> Nothing could be more trying than the position of Herrera's government. It was expected to resurrect the country, reorganize departments, aid institutions, and restore prosperity generally; and all this without means, and in the face of violent opposition from parties intent only on their own advancement, and ready to plunge the nation into greater troubles by fomenting outbreaks in different quarters.[3]

The keynote of Herrera's presidential acceptance speech was his expressed determination to give to Mexico a sound and competent "*administración pública.*"[4] An honest and capable public administration, he said, was the crying need of the nation, and, without it, Mexico's only prospect was total chaos and civil war. With this in mind, President Herrera selected his cabinet advisers with much care. On the same day that he assumed the presidency, Herrera appointed Mariano Otero as Minister of Foreign Relations. José María Jiménez was asked to take the portfolio of Justice and Clerical Affairs, and Mariano Riva Palacio was selected for the difficult post of Minister of Finance.[5] A few days later General Mariano Arista, the strongest military figure at that time, was made Minister of War and Marine.[6] Naturally, these men represented opinions and viewpoints similar to those of the president. State governors and other public officials wrote to Herrera expressing approval of his election and offering their full coöperation and support.[7] These expressions of loyalty were most encouraging and timely since there was already a small-scale revolt in Aguascalientes against the acceptance of the terms of the treaty of peace.

One of the first acts of President Herrera was to arrange for the transfer of the seat of government from Querétaro to the Mexican capital. He decreed that Congress would continue its sessions in Querétaro until June 12, and would then resume its business in Mexico City on the fifteenth. During the three day interim, the Council of Government was to exercise full power until Congress could be reconvened.[8] On June 8, Herrera left Querétaro and journeyed to the little village of Mixcoac where he arrived two days later. He remained there until the American troops had evacuated the capital. Between nine and ten o'clock on the night of June 12, the president and his ministers, accompanied by twelve cavalrymen, entered Mexico City unannounced. The president wished to return without fanfare and "to avoid any kind of public demonstration."[9] On the appointed fifteenth, Congress opened its meetings in the Hall of Sessions. The administration had now returned to its official residence, and the business of government was under way.

---

[3] Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, V, 557.

[4] "El general D. José Joaquín de Herrera, al jurar como proprietario en 2 de junio de 1848," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 1848, p. 352.

[5] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 56, p. 159; Ignacio Álvarez, *Historia de México*, V, 398.

[6] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 58, p. 161. Arista took the oath of office on June 11, 1848.

[7] *El Siglo XIX*, June 10, 1848.

[8] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 57, pp. 159–160. Another decree, dated June 13, required deputies and senators to take their seats in Congress within fifteen days after their election. This was to prevent undue delays in arrival which had resulted in not enough members being present to constitute a quorum. *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 59, p. 161.

From the outset, the administration's political existence was threatened by the rebellion of General Paredes y Arrillaga and Father Jarauta. Paredes, who had criminally overthrown the constitutional administration of Herrera in December, 1845, had held the presidency only a short time. He had, in turn, been ousted from power and exiled. During the confusion of the latter months of the war with the United States, Paredes had returned to Mexico but took no part in the defense of his country. His offers of assistance, as well as his later request to leave the republic, had been denied.[10] Piqued by this rejection and bitterly opposed to the terms of peace, he fomented an insurrection in Aguascalientes in the middle of May, 1848, before Herrera had actually been elected. The program of the revolutionists, at first rather vague, was directed chiefly against the treaty of peace whose terms were declared to be onerous and not in keeping with national honor and dignity.[11] The natural corollary of this attitude was also to oppose the persons responsible for the treaty and the new government which was bound by principles of honesty and international law to carry out its terms.[12]

The intriguing hand of Paredes was not discernable at first at Aguascalientes, but it was generally suspected that he was the guiding force of the May 15th revolt. As the movement progressed, his identity with it became known. His chief assistant and follower was the hot-headed *padre,* Celedonio Jarauta, who had performed valuable service for Mexico during the recent war but had now had his energies diverted into less patriotic channels.[13] Jarauta was sent to Lagos the latter part of May with fifty men to convert the small garrison of that town to the support of Paredes. Once the garrison was in accord with the rebels, Jarauta published on June 1, a formal "plan" in which the malcontents advocated a treasonous rebellion against the existing government. This occurred just at the time when Congress was trying to persuade General Herrera that the public welfare made his acceptance of the presidency mandatory.

---

[9] *El Siglo XIX*, June 13, 1848. "Anoche de nueve á diez, entraron a esta Capital el Sr. Presidente y sus Ministros. No quisieron anunciar su llegada para evitar toda demonstración pública, la escolta que trajeron se redujo a 12 hombres de Caballería permanente que han vuelto a salir para unirse a su cuerpo." Baronesa de Wilson, *México y sus gobernantes*, 159.

[10] Álvarez, *op. cit.*, V, 396. "General Paredes, during the American invasion, disembarked at Veracruz in disguise, and being now in the country, offered his services to the government in the war which it carried on against the foreign enemy; but not only was his offer not accepted, but he was even denied freedom to return to a foreign land."

[11] Francisco Paula de Arrangoiz, *México desde 1808 hasta 1867*, II, 294; Álvarez, *op. cit.*, V, 396.

[12] General Bustamante stated that the success of the Paredes revolt would bring complete ruin to Mexico. *El Siglo XIX*, July 11, 1848.

The plan stated that the

> work of iniquity begun in 1845 would be destroyed; that more than half of the country had been sold for a song; and that the rest of the republic was occupied by the North American soldiers.[14]

Peña y Peña was referred to as the traitor who converted these troops into a guard to sustain the most atrocious crime of the centuries. In an effort to stir up opposition to the government, it was asked whether

> they [the people] could look with indifference upon the selling of their brave countrymen in California, New Mexico and Chihuahua to the invader.

This subversive proclamation concluded with five articles which in summary are as follows:

> 1. The existing government should not be recognized.
> 2. The states, therefore, resume their sovereignty.
> 3. The states will themselves decide on ways and means of replacing the fallen government.
> 4. The governor of each state will appoint a commander of the state's military forces.
> 5. The forces of the regular army who adhere to this plan will remain orderly and conform to the orders and commands of the ranking general among those who second this plan.[15]

---

[13] "The negotiation of a treaty to bring peace to distracted Mexico was the source of great trouble in the country, caused by those who used it as a pretext to promote their own aims." Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 548–549; Álvarez, *op. cit.*, V, 396; Riva Palacio (ed.), *op. cit.*, IV, 711–712.

[14] Zamacois, *Historia de México*, XIII, 162. The general evacuation by the American troops had not yet begun. Congress at this point was considering the abolition of the death penalty, but it dropped the measure as tending to encourage the Paredes faction. Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 85.

[15] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 162–163. Article 5 prepared the way for General Paredes to gain control of the army. He was to support the movement at the psychological moment if the rebellion appeared to have chances of success. The preparation of this infamous document was secretly directed by Paredes and supported by seven other men. It was signed by Celedonio Domeco de Jarauta, Colonel Juan Ortíz, Commander José María Martínez

A correspondent of the newspaper, *El Siglo XIX*, wrote from San Juan de los Lagos on June 7 that the town had gone over to Paredes. The national guard of Jalisco, however, remained loyal to the government. This reporter also stated that he felt sure that Paredes was the prime mover in the insurrection and

> if General Guerra Manzanares, the commander of the local troops, had done his duty the garrison in Lagos would not have gone over to the rebels.[16]

With the revolution well on its way, Paredes openly showed his hand. He left Aguascalientes on June 12 to join Jarauta in Lagos. On the same night, Herrera entered Mexico City and began to make plans for crushing the rebellion.

The urgency of an effective remedy for this evil was apparent in order that the revolution should not be allowed to gain ground and "spread its killing virus through the social body."[17] Constitutional government had to be maintained at all costs if the program of reconstruction was successfully to be pursued. Mexico deserved a better fate than to be subjected to a new internal political convulsion. President Herrera took immediate steps to quell the uprising and to insure the peace. He sent orders to the governors of the states nearest the infected area to be on guard and to send troops to be used against the rebels.

In the meantime, the United States forces of occupation continued their peaceful and orderly evacuation. The sympathies of these troops were with the Herrera government, and there was no disposition to favor the Paredes faction which had so demonstrated its lack of respect for the sanctity of treaty agreements and constituted authority. The American commissioner, Nathan Clifford, wrote from Mexico to his government, denouncing Paredes and Jarauta as "incendiaries" and urging that every support be given to President Herrera. On behalf of the Herrera régime, he said:

> It will be borne in mind that the present administration is republican in the strictest sense, and the first constitutional Government that Mexico has enjoyed for many years. . . . A day or two more will solve the problem; and should the Government be successful, they may be able to sustain themselves and afford a chance to this unhappy people to begin a new era of tranquillity and improvement.[18]

Negrete, Lieutenant Anastasio Guadarrama, Nicolás Castañeda, Eligio Ortiz and Captain Nicolás Montenegro. The complete plan may be found in *El Siglo XIX*, June 19, 1848.

[16] *El Siglo XIX*, June 13, 1848. General Manzanares, who had a superior force, could have easily defeated the revolutionists had he chosen to do so.

[17] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 167; Arrangoiz, *op. cit.*, II, 294.

[18] Letter of Nathan Clifford, United States Commissioner to Mexico, to James Buchanan, Secretary of State, June 26, 1848, quoted in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, Vol. 6, pp. 304–307.

It is incredible that there were Mexican leaders who were so insensible to the well-being and best interests of the republic. Such a revolution as contemplated by Paredes, if successful, could have had only the most serious consequences for Mexico. It represented a continuation of the old political instability, the greatest deteriorating force to national development and progress. Herrera was one of the few constitutionally-elected chief representatives of the people. He sincerely desired to give Mexico an era of peace and prosperity in order to enable her to recover from the war and to take her merited place among the first nations of the earth. Herrera knew that if his government did not succeed in putting down the revolt, Paredes and his followers would repudiate the treaty with the United States and disregard Mexico's obligations under it. This would undoubtedly lead to a renewal of the conflict for which Mexico was totally unprepared. Continued war with the United States would most certainly result in further dismemberment of national territory. There were still grim rumors from the northern provinces of Mexico, which had felt the effects of the war most, to the effect that an independent republic of the Sierra Madre was favorably regarded in some quarters. Paredes' proclamation could do no more than encourage this division and such secessionist thinking. Surely Paredes and others of his ilk could see the folly of pressing their own political ambitions when the very life of Mexico was the price to pay for their caprice. The Mexican historian Zamacois characterizes their lack of foresight as nothing short of criminal.[19] Only seven wilful men had signed the *Plan de Aguascalientes* and pretended to be the interpreters of the national will. All Mexicans were saddened over the outcome of the war and the loss of territory, but they also realized that national honor would be compromised if treaties, entered into by accredited representatives of Mexico, were broken. The people were weary of war and bloodshed and longed for peace. Appeals for support of a new revolutionary movement, therefore, gained relatively few adherents.

By decree of June 12, President Herrera endeavored to guard against possible rioting and disorder in the capital. The capital had long been the center of revolutions and Herrera feared that Paredes' revolt might have repercussions there. The citadel, which had served as a fort and general arsenal, was stripped of its equipment and converted into a municipal office building.[20] The axiom had been "whoever holds the citadel controls the capital" and Herrera wisely ordered the local governor, Juan María Flores, to destroy the fortifications and fill in the moat around the fort. This was immediately done with the use of convict labor and one of the most potential threats to the peace of the city was removed.

---

[19] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 175–176. The author makes a defense for the nation as a whole by saying: "Many people throughout the world have gained the mistaken idea that Mexico is an ungovernable and revolutionary nation." This, he adds, "is a crass error unfortunately made through misinformation and from external appearances. The people of Mexico are a peaceful people by nature. Only a few ambitious politicians and military leaders are responsible for the chaotic conditions afflicting the republic. But the will of the majority was set aside by the revolutionary minority which imposed its will on the peaceful inhabitants as armed force always does when it breaks the restraints of discipline and order."

Congress passed another very significant measure at the same time which declared that the remaining twelve million dollars of the indemnity from the United States could not be spent without the express approval of that body. Without this restriction, it was feared that such a large sum would be an incentive for grasping political and military leaders to revolt against the government in an effort to control these funds. It was hoped that revolution would be less attractive if these resources were placed outside their grasp. The first three millions already paid were allocated by Congress to meet the ordinary expenses of government.[21]

Meanwhile, Paredes arrived at Lagos and immediately assumed command of the forces there. He then decided to move on Guanajuato but only after engaging in secret negotiations with the commanders of the local garrison to insure success. On June 15, he entered Guanajuato unopposed, the plan of revolt having been accepted by the local troops. His first step was to depose Governor Lorenzo Arellano, who had refused to join him and had remained loyal to the central government. A special *junta* called by Paredes conferred the governorship upon a Guanajuato attorney, Manuel Doblado, who naturally was an active Paredes supporter. Doblado gladly accepted this doubtful honor and tried to justify his hurried acceptance in a manifesto by saying:

> the recent events in Guanajuato have caused the former governor to abandon his post, leaving the state helpless in its hour of need.[22]

The new governor charged with "cowardice and dishonor" those who had made the peace. He concluded by pledging that "Mexicans who feel their foreheads burn with shame" would witness the recovery of national honor and the revocation of the peace of defeat. Most of the people were unimpressed, but those who held back were coerced into joining the rebels.[23]

---

[20] The fortress was converted into "Oficinas del Servicio Público y Beneficiencia." *El Siglo XIX*, June 13, 1848.

[21] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 60, pp. 166–171.

[22] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 181. Doblado claimed that time did not allow for the customary election procedure and that the commanding general had called the *junta* in session as an emergency measure. He also stated that he had accepted the post with much reluctance and only from a feeling of civic responsibility. Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 711–712; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 358.

Invitations by Paredes to the various governors to second his plan fell on deaf ears. Governor Santos Degollado sent a reply which indicated the general response received:

> The letter from your excellency of June 17, in which you invite me to support your revolutionary plan, has filled me with sorrow at [the thought of] the evils which you bring upon our country. I am ashamed to think that you believe me capable of such a shameful and criminal act.[24]

Governor José María Parás of Nuevo León reminded Paredes that it was his own precipitate action in overthrowing President Herrera in December of 1845 that had brought on the war with the United States. It was he who, more than anyone else, could be charged with the ultimate loss of California, New Mexico, and Arizona. Governor Parás' letter to Paredes read, in part:

> It is as unbelievable as it is astounding that you, who failed to fight the invader on the frontier, should now be fomenting a revolution whose consequences [for evil] are incalculable. You failed to do your duty as a soldier and succeeded in overthrowing the most legitimate government the nation has ever had. The overthrow of the Herrera government [in 1845] brought to naught the negotiations that had been skilfully carried on in an effort to avoid a break with the United States which, if it occurred, could have only resulted in the misfortune we now lament.[25]

Chiding the rebel leader further, Parás said that once Paredes had come to power, he had not prosecuted the war as promised but had remained close to the capital for fear that a counter revolutionary movement might unseat him. These were unanswerable arguments and patent proof that the war had produced a real spirit of nationalism in Mexico and a loyalty to the federal government heretofore unknown since the winning of independence.

While Paredes was thus engaged, President Herrera and Minister of War Arista bent every effort toward meeting his challenge. General Anastasio Bustamante was made commander of the troops sent against Paredes at Guanajuato. The administration, in appointing Bustamante, felt confident that Paredes could not win him over by bribery or promises, and in this trust they were justified. On June 18, Herrera issued a proclamation to the people concerning the revolt of Paredes and encouraging them to stand fast. He stated that

---

[23] Neither Doblado's manifesto nor the invitations sent by Paredes to the various state governors to join the revolutionary movement produced the least enthusiasm.

[24] Quoted in Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 183.

[25] *Ibid.*

> no responsible authority has recognized the revolution; no state has forgotten its duties and allegiance; none of the political parties who have as their guiding principle the "*Nacionalidad de México*" has supported its cause.[26]

This public appeal by the president did much to awaken a spirit of national consciousness in the people. Its stirring words aroused free men everywhere to defend the government. Herrera had tried to make each individual feel his own responsibility to the nation by saying:

> The cause is not mine, nor of individual men, nor of any single party: it is the cause of the Nation and all that she is made of that is noble and honorable. I count, therefore, upon you all to save her. It is the cause of the honorable man who wants to enjoy the fruits of his labor in peace; of the *republicano* who hopes for an orderly development of liberal institutions; of those who shed their blood for independence and have seen that independence lost by these criminal acts; of those who know that if such a cause fails, our children would not be able to call themselves Mexicans.[27]

The two opposing forces around Guanajuato prepared for battle. Leaders of the Paredes group resolved to fortify and defend the Alhóndiga of previous historical fame. The rebels hoped that many of the government troops would desert and come over to them when they drew near to the city. Meanwhile, General Bustamante awaited at Solea the arrival of reënforcements under General Pedro Cortazar from other portions of the state. Bustamante was soon joined by 600 men under the command of Cortazar, General Miñón, General Yáñez, and General Lombardini.[28]

As another precautionary measure to insure loyalty, President Herrera in Mexico City sent orders to the commanding generals in each state to remove all officers and leaders who had, at any time, taken part in any seditious plan directed against the government. These orders were being carried out when a new disturbance occurred in Guadalupe among the men of the San Patricio companies; momentarily, it drew attention from the main endeavor at Guanajuato.

---

[26] This proclamation appeared in *El Siglo XIX*, June 19, 1848, as well as in other newspapers of the capital. President Herrera reminded the people that he had not sought the presidency but had accepted its responsibilities only after persistent urging. Also in the proclamation may be read: "Nunca he ambicionado el poder: la revolución jamás lo ha colocado en mis manos y ahora lo tengo, porque no se admitió mi reiterada renuncia. ¿Cuáles son los hombres que el órden actual excluye, las clases que persique, los intereses que sacrifica? Mis pensamientos dominantes son la justicia y la moderación. La República me conoce."

[27] *El Siglo XIX*, June 19, 1848. Much of the original force of the proclamation is lost in translation. All proclamations, decrees, etc., of this period closed with the customary "*Dios y Libertad.*"

[28] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 184; *El Siglo XIX*, June 17 and 19, 1848.

The garrison at Guadalupe was largely made up of Irish Catholics who had deserted the United States' forces during the Mexican War to fight for Mexico and Catholicism. The Mexican government authorities had little faith in these men and had kept a watchful eye on their behavior. Since it was feared that some of the officers of the San Patricio companies were plotting to support the Paredes revolt, the commander of the San Patricio battalion, Juan Reely, was put in prison. The majority of the men were, of course, loyal soldiers, but rumor soon began to circulate that Reely would be shot, the battalion disarmed, and some of the men executed. Lieutenants Peel and Maloney succeeded in so alarming the men that they decided to march to join Paredes and the revolutionists. Colonel Calderón tried to dispel their fears and to persuade them that no attempt on their lives was contemplated. Unconvinced, the battalion marched out of the city, but the undaunted colonel followed, arguing as he went. After having gone a short distance, he was able to persuade all but 35 of the men to give up their plan and to return to the city as loyal government troops. The smaller group continued on to Cuautitlán where they had hoped to sack the town. Fortunately, the authorities had been forewarned and were forearmed. The rebels were forced to surrender, and the incident was closed. In an effort to avoid any possible further disturbance, the Herrera government ordered the dissolution of the San Patricio companies.[29]

This minor uprising at Guadalupe having been quickly handled, attention was eagerly turned to events at Guanajuato, where the fate of the government was at stake. As had been expected, Paredes sent several emissaries to make various lucrative proposals to Bustamante in an attempt to win his support. These delegations were bluntly informed that General Bustamante's services were not for hire and that his course was dictated only by principles of loyalty to his government and to his president. The delegates had to return without the satisfaction of having been granted an audience. Paredes saw that neither diplomacy nor duplicity were of any avail and prepared to defend the city against attack. Father Jarauta was sent among the people, who had great respect for his bravery and wisdom, to encourage them to defend Guanajuato against the government troops.

By July 2, Bustamante felt that he was prepared to meet the enemy, and, leaving Silao that day, he arrived on the outskirts of Guanajuato on July 3. That afternoon saw slight skirmishes between the outposts of the opposing forces. The next three days brought no major move by either side, but, in the intermittent sallies, Bustamante's forces fared the worse. Attempts to dislodge the defenders of Guanajuato on July 8 were repulsed, and the revolutionists were greatly encouraged when thirty-three of the government troops and two of their officers joined their ranks on the following day. Paredes began to feel that the success of the revolt was assured.

---

[29] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, *XIII*, 190–195; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 713.

Bustamante decided to make an all-out effort to force the rebels to surrender, and, after hard fighting, occupied the important position of Valenciana. The nature of the terrain made it extremely difficult to bring up the artillery, but once in possession of Valenciana and Mellado, the way was open to Guanajuato itself. The major offensive against the city came on July 18, and it followed a plan proposed by General Miñón and adopted by Bustamante. Officers and men of both groups fought with unusual bravery. Father Jarauta personally led the defenders of Gritería hill, defending that position with reckless daring.[30] Pressing the attack with vigor, the forces of General Bustamante drove the enemy back at all points. Jarauta was taken prisoner, and his identity became known when he was addressed by one of the other captives. In conformity with orders issued by Minister of War Arista, Jarauta was taken to Valenciana and several hours later shot as a traitor.[31]

The conservatives and their newspapers took this occasion to denounce Arista for the summary execution of a political offender. The offense, however, not only was political but constituted an act of treason against the constitutional government. Too often had these rebels against authority been allowed to go free, only to practice their intrigue at the next opportunity. The majority of the people defended Arista's action as the only "sure remedy to prevent other revolutions" which claimed thousands of lives and inhibited the progress of the nation.

---

[30] It was claimed, however, that the eventual capture of this position by the government forces was due to bribery of its defenders. *La Dignidad* of Puebla, July 19, 20, 1848. Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 198.

[31] This summary execution of the Spanish *padre,* who had so ably fought for the Mexican cause against the United States, was bitterly criticized by the conservatives. They felt the sentence of death was extremely harsh and might well have been exile from the country. There had been many revolutions and revolutionary leaders but such drastic measures had not usually been applied against political malcontents in times past. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico,* XIII, 200; *El Universal* later stated: "Father Jarauta still carried unhealed wounds in his chest which he had received bravely facing the foreign invader; those who assassinated him, had none, not even in their backs which was all that they showed the enemy." The historian Arrangoiz said of him: "Whatever his political mistakes were, one should be grateful for the life of a man who, without being a Mexican, conducted himself with distinction in the war with the United States."—*Méjico desde 1808 hasta 1867,* II, 294.

The death of Jarauta was a discouraging blow to the Paredes cause and the defenders of Guanajuato. He, more than anyone else, had kept their spirits at high tide. In a move to prevent unnecessary bloodshed, General Bustamante sent a note to the local *ayuntamiento* urging surrender and a cessation of hostilities. He also sent word to Paredes urging him to give himself up and avoid a futile continuation of the conflict. Paredes replied that since no guarantee had been given that the lives of himself, his officers and men would be spared, he could not capitulate under the suggested conditions. He indicated that the defenders had decided to fight to the finish, but actually this was a ruse to gain time for Paredes to plan his desertion and escape.[32]

While Bustamante was preparing for the final crushing attack and Paredes was issuing orders for a renewed defense of the city, Paredes secretly consorted with his chiefs and his puppet governor, Doblado, as to ways and means of escape. Before dawn of July 19, Paredes, Doblado, and three others stealthily slipped out of the sleeping city. Left leaderless, the city surrendered to Bustamante without further ado. Orders were immediately sent out by Bustamante to the neighboring states to apprehend the fugitives. By guile, bribery or skill the fleeing rebels managed to elude their pursuers.

Several months passed and the rebel leaders had not been captured. Always fearful that Paredes might appear at any moment to offer further resistance, President Herrera sent new instructions to the state authorities to make every effort to bring these disturbers of the peace to justice. Herrera pointed out that a firm hand, not leniency, was needed if Mexico was to be spared a continued "frenzy of factions" and political instability. Paredes, meanwhile, had succeeded in entering Mexico City, taking refuge in a convent where he remained in hiding until his death in 1849.[33] The Herrera administration had weathered its first major political crisis.

The day before Guanajuato fell and Paredes fled from the city, there occurred a revolt at the port of Mazatlán in Sinaloa in support of the Paredes revolutionary plan. The leader of the revolt was Antonio Palacios Miranda whose first act was to imprison the leading government supporters in that area. Five of the chief military officers were sent to the fort of Mazatlán at San Blas on board the schooner, *Carmelita.* The collector of customs was deposed in favor of a more accommodating administrator. Miranda soon lost his nerve when he learned that Guanajuato had fallen, that Paredes had fled, and that the government troops in the West were being sent against him. Following Paredes' example, Miranda and his aides saved themselves by flight on the night of July 29. The non-commissioned officers of the garrison on learning that they had been left in the lurch seized four of the remaining leaders. They then drew up a petition to the federal government to the effect that they had had nothing to do with the rebellion and were placing themselves and their captives at President Herrera's disposal. On July 31, the former customs collector of the port, Miguel Lazo, with seventy men and General Juan Pablo Anaya, commander of the government forces, entered Mazatlán. Once more the forces of law and order had triumphed, and another revolt against the Herrera administration had failed.[34]

---

[32] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 203. As early as June 29, the correspondent of *El Siglo XIX* reported that it appeared that Paredes was planning a rapid flight from Guanajuato, "collecting supplies and mules" for that purpose.

[33] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 262; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 549–550; Arrangoiz, *op. cit.*, II, 294.

These political disaffections, however, were like the many-headed Hydra of Lerna; no sooner had several of the heads been lopped off than others appeared to take their places. Within the capital itself, political aspirants met secretly to rant and scheme against the government. However,

> The entire nation, that is the common people, lamented the secret plottings of the revolutionaries. The demand for peace was everywhere apparent. Deputy Manuel Payno sought to prevent the spread of revolution and on July 25, 1848, presented a resolution in Congress that anyone who revolted against the government would be outside the protection of the law.[35]

Several of the leading journals published articles directed against ambitious politicians who thought more of personal gain than of national welfare. They were compared to common thieves and assassins. The newspaper, *El Monitor Republicano,* stated that even the worst criminals endangered the lives of "not more than a hundred families" while the rebel against constituted authority "injured the whole nation, spilling more blood and killing more citizens than the worst assassin."[36] Apparently, there was being slowly developed a feeling of national consciousness, a desire to better conditions in the republic, a greater regard for the dignity of the common citizen, and a rising resentment against the control of the *caudillo-político*. The way was being prepared for the great War of Reform. President Herrera was making progress in the resurrection of the national spirit and was making clearer the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

---

[34] For details see Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 202–205.

[35] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 206. There were many other proposals at this time to outlaw all political revolutionists who resorted to violence in an attempt to overthrow the government. In order to make these proposals effective, the death penalty was recommended. These resolutions give some idea of the spirit of the times and the earnest desire to provide strong and stable administration. *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc .96, pp. 272–273, lists a law of July 20 to expedite justice and to eliminate leniency in military cases.

At the beginning of the new year, conditions generally in the republic had improved. Yucatán, although not completely pacified, had been reincorporated into the federal union in July. All efforts to overthrow the federal government had failed.

> It seemed that Providence finally had decided to favor our country, for at the close of the year peace was peeping over the political horizon, usually so melancholy.[37]

President Herrera reported to Congress that the "government has made uniform and constitutional progress." He noted that within the nation "a happy change has occurred which assures a gradual improvement under the guidance of law and unity."[38] His efforts to regenerate public administration also had brought beneficial results.

Paredes had raised the political question of what would be done with former Mexican citizens residing in the territory ceded to the United States. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo offered protection to all those wishing to remain in the United States but also permitted the return to Mexico of all citizens wishing to do so. Herrera gave his attention to this problem of repatriation in a decree of August 19, 1848. Lands were set aside in the northern frontier provinces and all those wishing to return to the republic were to be moved across the border at the expense of the Mexican government and with the coöperation of the United States authorities.

> Those in New Mexico were to go to Chihuahua; those on the left bank of the Rio Bravo, to Tamaulipas, Coahuila or Nuevo León, and those of Upper

---

[36] *El Monitor Republicano*, July 31, 1848. The article added that these political malcontents had destroyed property, ruined family fortunes, and turned brother against brother in their reckless desire to obtain power. They had broken public morale, brought on the war with the United States, and involved the republic in innumerable civil wars. "Rebels, in a word, had ruined the nation." Why imprison these men only to have them released by other revolutionaries? Why send them into exile, only to allow them to plot new revolts and to return to practice anew their evil art?

[37] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 130.

[38] "El general José Joaquín de Herrera, al abrirse las sesiones ordinarias en 1 de enero de 1849," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 1849, p. 356.

> California were to be given lands in Lower California or Sonora. The commissioners appointed for each area were to confer with their respective State governments to agree on lands to be set aside for the immigrants.[39]

This was Herrera's effective and adequate reply to Paredes' charge that Mexican citizens "had been sold" to the invader and abandoned.

One of the strongest factors to be reckoned with in national politics was the press. Each party had its official or unofficial organ. These often reviled one another bitterly and openly attacked the government beyond the bounds of reason. Although many of the sheets were extremely radical and partisan, the Herrera administration endeavored to uphold the principle of freedom of the press with certain necessary restrictions. In national elections each candidate usually had the backing of one or more of the leading papers. For the most part these newspapers were owned by persons high in political circles or were subsidized by special interest groups. Writers for the press were allowed to denounce any public act of federal officials but in no case was the private life of these men to be criticized nor could public morals be undermined in any fashion.

> Any writing was considered libel if it attacked the honor or reputation of an individual, corporation, or public official or attacked him with satire, invective, or abusive names. This, of course, did not include the free examination of the official conduct of officers discharging their duties in determining the legality and propriety of their acts. The penalty for libel or an attack on public morality was six months' to two years' imprisonment.[40]

Of course, these restrictions were violated and more than one cabinet minister resigned rather than be the subject of daily vituperation and abuse. This was particularly true of Ministers of Finance and of Foreign Relations.[41]

El Universal, one of the ablest journals of this period, advocated the conservative, and, less openly, the monarchical systems. The newspaper, *El Tiempo*, supported the monarchical proposal without subterfuge. *El Monitor Republicano* and *El Siglo XIX* were friendly to the prevailing republican administration but freely criticized the weaknesses of the government.[42] More liberal newspapers, such as *El Arco Iris* and *El Eco del Comercio*, made an effort to secure religious toleration and freedom of worship. This proposal met with such strong opposition that it had to be postponed owing to its serious political as well as religious implications. President Herrera did not openly espouse this principle but probably would have favored its adoption had this course not involved additional internal dissension and division. The fact that articles were allowed to appear demanding religious and other freedoms, the eradication of class privileges, and social injustice was evidence of the liberal trend of the times and indicated the awakening of a more democratic spirit. This liberal growth was preparing the way for the not-far-distant War of Reform.[43]

---

[39] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, I, Doc. 123, pp. 307–314; Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 86–87.

[40] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, I, Doc. 65, pp. 176–179; Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 214.

[41] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 716. The author states that the resignation of Mariano Riva Palacio in August, 1848, was largely due to unjust newspaper criticism, particularly in *El Estopín* [Spitfire] of Querétaro during July and August.

[42] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 557.

Following the war with the United States, the monarchists had once more centered their hopes in Paredes. His defeat at Guanajuato and his death the next year left their cause without a suitable military leader. It was also obvious that neither the people nor the politicians favored their plans. The monarchists, therefore, decided to turn their support to the *Santanistas* in an effort to regain control. Santa Anna's followers had been carefully planning his eventual return ever since his exile in 1847. However, his popularity was at low ebb since most of the people felt that he had deserted the nation in "her hour of need" when the Americans had invaded the capital. Both parties seemed content for the time being to attack the Herrera régime through the press and to try to promote discord within Herrera's cabinet and in the ranks of the federalist party. One attempt was made to bring about a break between President Herrera and his Minister of War, Arista. It was stated that Arista sought to make himself a dictator and that he, more than Herrera, formulated the administration's policy.[44] It was also charged that the other cabinet ministers refused to work with the ambitious Arista and that this was the reason for the many resignations in the ministry.[45] Although there may have been some ill feeling, only one change in the cabinet can be directly charged to Arista. This was the resignation of Jiménez as Minister of Justice and Clerical Affairs, the only change in that office during Herrera's presidency. This came about as a result of interference by Arista in elections in the Federal District and the removal of the local conservative *ayuntamiento*. There were two changes in Ministers of Foreign Affairs and sixteen in Ministers of Finance if provisional appointments are included. Arista, himself, held the post of Minister of War throughout Herrera's term of office. It would therefore appear that the great majority of resignations were due to the difficulties of an impossible financial situation for which Arista could hardly be held responsible. However, it is quite understandable that the opposition would make these charges to raise doubts in the minds of the people and to discredit the administration.

---

[43] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 160. The author is of the opinion that precursors of the War of Reform could be seen and were nurtured by the Herrera administration. "Por donde quiera aparecían síntomas de una revolución: la sorda agitación de los partidos, el carácter que tomaban las discussiones de la prensa, los rumores públicos y la desconfianza que reinaba acerca del porvenir, eran otras tantas señales que presagiaban uno de esos grandes movimientos que cambian la faz de las naciones, aunque las condiciones en que quedó México lo retardaron por algún tiempo." Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 720: ". . . la revolución esencialmente reformista se impornía natural é includible."

[44] On December 30, 1848, many lampoons appeared in the capital accusing Arista of dictatorial action and intention. All of this was intended to break down confidence in the government and to make people despair of ever establishing order and security under President Herrera. The *Santanistas* and monarchists were the instigators. Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 258.

It was true that Arista, although discharging his official duties in an efficient manner, did use his position to strengthen his own political standing, which culminated in his election to the presidency in 1851. This was, in reality, the chief complaint of the opposition. Arista was undoubtedly the dominating personality in the cabinet. This was due not only to his own aggressiveness but also to his position as Minister of War. It was claimed by some that Herrera was in awe of Arista and was guided almost entirely by his opinions. Certainly if Herrera had any fault it was in not possessing a dominating spirit. What he did possess of infinitely greater value and benefit to Mexico was honesty, dependability, sound judgment, and perseverance. By the very nature of his all but untenable position as president during the most trying times the republic had ever experienced, Herrera was forced to lean heavily on his war minister. If the army revolted or went over to the opposition, all was lost. It was much more desirable to have Arista in the government, whatever his shortcomings may have been, than to have him in opposition to it. Arista's inclusion in the cabinet was not only desirable but essential. To his credit it may be said that the government's success in maintaining itself was in a large measure due to his loyal efforts. It also appears that relations between Arista and the president were cordial and harmonious. Herrera later supported Arista for the presidency.

---

[45] Álvarez, *op. cit.*, V, 397. The author attributes this to Arista's actions. ". . . no podían estar conformes los Sres. Otero, Riva Palacio y Jiménez que verdaderamente deseaban el bién al país, con el modo de obrar del general Arista que dirigía sus operaciones á la realización de sus miras particulares."

In January, 1849, news reached the capital that local garrisons in Temascaltepec and Sultepec to the south had revolted against the Herrera government. The rebel leader was Estéban V. León. Anxious days were spent in waiting to hear if the old liberal war horse in that area, Juan Álvarez, would support the government or the revolutionists.[46] These fears were happily dispelled when President Herrera received a letter from the federal commander at Tierra Colorada, dated January 8, stating that Álvarez intended to aid the government and that he was sending troops to Iguala to carry on a campaign against the rebels. With the irresistible support of the mountaineer chieftain, the insurrection was quickly reduced to impotence. Another small-scale incident, in which the *Santanistas* had a hand, occurred in the State of Mexico. The *alcalde* of Tulyahualco in the province of Tlalpam refused to give up his authority following an election in which he was defeated. Followers of Santa Anna urged the *alcalde,* Juan Shalapa, to resist.[47] Judge Joaquín G. Aguirre immediately appealed to the Federal District for aid, and Herrera sent troops to restore order. The uprising was suppressed before it was fairly begun. However, it was noted that

> the people and provincial authorities neglected to display that patriotic spirit, and to offer that passive if not active coöperation needed by a government charged with so important a task as the reorganization of the administrative departments.[48]

Although these local disturbances were uniformly short-lived, they kept the countryside in a perpetual state of agitation and tended to paralyze local trade and commerce.

The union of monarchists with *Santanistas* resulted in bolder efforts to effect that picturesque rascal's return. Always willing to promise the moon, the stars, and anything else, the adherents of Santa Anna had readily altered their elastic program to include a few statements and promises satisfying to their new allies. Skilful feints were made in an effort to discover weak spots in the government's position. Race hatred, party differences, the treaty of peace, and other controversial and dangerous subjects were continually brought up and exploited with the purpose of creating doubt and disunity. One might ask what chance had Mexico, or President Herrera, or any other legitimate government in Mexico to fulfill its mission successfully in the light of these sinister, irresponsible political machinations. National welfare meant nothing; personal aggrandizement meant everything. Now that the time appeared to be opportune, this group flooded Congress with petitions requesting permission to bring their leader back from exile. The administration well knew what this would mean. Santa Anna, once returned, would use his magnetic personality and a few well-placed bribes to organize a large following to overthrow the very government granting his entry. Law-abiding citizens everywhere dreaded to think of Santa Anna's reappearance and requested Congress to deny the petitions. State legislatures remembered his subversion of former constitutions and their legislative powers and voiced disapproval of his recall.[49] The federal Congress was itself perturbed. A majority of its members were moderate liberals and loyal to President Herrera. The Chambers, therefore, hastened to declare that so dangerous an agitator and rabble rouser "must not set foot on Mexican soil without their permission."[50] In secret session on February 14, 1849, the Chambers met to declare that:

---

[46] Juan Álvarez was an old follower of Morelos, who, for nearly fifty years, was the undisputed master of the mountains of the south, so that it was said that not a leaf could stir in the entire territory without his consent. The most uncompromising of liberal warriors during the Civil War, Álvarez lived as a *ranchero* and was proud of the fact that he ploughed his land with his own hands. Parkes, *History of Mexico,* 180–181.

[47] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 263.

[48] Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 559. The revolt occurred on January 15, and the *Santanistas* even resorted to stirring up racial hatred in the area to accomplish their ends. Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 263–264.

1. Santa Anna must indicate to the government, if he desired to return, the time and place of his proposed entry.
2. This request would be referred by the proper authorities to the Congress for its approval or rejection.
3. Santa Anna must comply with these regulations and agree to do nothing to disturb the peace or engage in any revolutionary activity.
4. No steps could be taken by Santa Anna to return to Mexico until notified by the existing government that he had permission to do so.[51]

This action by Congress had been hastened when it was learned that Leonardo Márquez, who up to this time had been fighting with the government forces against the Indian leader, Quiros, in the Sierra Gorda, had pronounced for Santa Anna on February 10. Márquez was the commander of a battalion under General Guzmán at this time. He was a great admirer of Santa Anna and later became one of the strongest supporters of the monarchists and the intervention of Maximilian. Márquez concluded that the generally disturbed conditions were conducive to his plan. He felt sure that the discontented soldiers who often went for months without pay would welcome the return of Santa Anna who had always been able by hook or crook to secure money for his armed retainers. Personally devoted to Santa Anna, Márquez was waiting only for an auspicious moment to pronounce in his favor. He also wanted to be sure that he, Márquez, received the credit for initiating the movement bringing about Santa Anna's return.[52] However, it was soon apparent that the *pronunciamiento* was premature. Márquez had expected an immediate and widespread acceptance, but only a few rallied to his standard. He miscalculated again in thinking that the majority of officers would support his cause. Instead, many officers and men from his own battalion deserted at the first opportunity and hurried to join the government forces under General Bustamante. This may have been an omen that Santa Anna was losing his power of persuasion. It, at least, was an indication that Santa Anna might well have noted and heeded when he eventually did return to power in 1853 to set up his last dictatorship. The people were undergoing a gradual change in political outlook. A spirit of nationalism, national self-consciousness, and loyalty to constituted authority were in embryonic evidence. The man who was now serving as president, José Joaquín de Herrera, represented a type of government and a man rarely seen in Mexican politics—a man of whom the people could be proud and whom they were proud to honor. There had been very few of these in Mexico, either men or administrations, and the majority realized this fact and were willing to go to great lengths to see that the Herrera administration was maintained.

---

[49] The legislative body of the State of Zacatecas petitioned Congress to deny the request, saying that Santa Anna represented "lawlessness and disorder" and was an influence for evil. He had abandoned "su Patria en los momentos de peligro," and did not deserve consideration. Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México,* II, 367.

[50] Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 558.

[51] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 269. The decree was so worded as to leave little doubt as to what the disposition of Congress would be if Santa Anna personally made such a request.

General Tomás Mejía moved against Márquez as soon as he was informed of the intrigue against Herrera. Márquez, realizing he must act quickly, marched toward Querétaro. Efforts which had been made to "fifth column" the government troops of that city were of little avail. Querétaro was to have been the key city of rebel activities, but General Bustamante, who had his headquarters there, once again refused to be won over by bribes or promises.

---

[52] The plan issued February 10, 1849, declared the earlier resignation of Santa Anna from the presidency should be considered void, and his term of office unexpired, owing to the absence of the Congress at the time. Herrera should surrender the presidency to a person chosen by a council until Santa Anna could return and convoke a new Congress. Bancroft, *History of Mexico,* V, 558; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.,* IV, 722–723. *El Siglo XIX* bitterly criticizes the Márquez revolt as treasonous. Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 143–146, gives a critical account. Also refer to Arrangoiz, *op. cit.,* II, 297.

The failure to win the support of the troops at Querétaro resulted in wholesale desertions in the ranks of Márquez mutineers. The *Santanistas* then retreated to La Griega, being hard pressed by the government troops. When the town was closely invested, Márquez decided to seek favorable terms for himself. Colonel Rafael Vásquez, after some secret negotiations, granted him a pass through the lines, realizing the revolt would collapse when the insurrectionists knew that they had been abandoned by their leader.[53] The situation was quite similar to that at Guanjuato when Paredes had deserted his men a few months earlier. The rebel troops opened the gates of the city when they learned of Márquez' flight and the abortive revolt for Santa Anna ended as a hopeless fiasco. Had the movement not been checked at the outset, there might have been widespread uprising in Santa Anna's name. The few scattered disturbances during the summer and autumn in behalf of the ex-dictator proved ineffectual. The president, Arista, Bustamante, and other leaders in the field displayed great energy and vigor in meeting these challenges. Administrative force and nerve were not lacking, and the constitutional government managed to ride out the storm. The chief result of the Márquez revolt was to encourage the Indians under Quiros to cease peaceful negotiations with the government and to renew the racial struggle. Three more months were required to complete the final subjugation of the Indians as a result of Márquez' treachery which tended to dissipate further the energies and resources of the Herrera government.[54]

Minor repercussions of the Paredes and Márquez revolts were successfully met by the loyal state governors and military leaders in various localities. An uprising in Tabasco in March, 1849, was quickly suppressed by Governor Justo Santa Anna with federal assistance. In early April, Governor Benito Juárez suffocated an embyronic revolt in Oaxaca while a similar effort by *Santanistas* in Tampico was put down by Herrera supporters.[55] There was an unsuccessful effort to oust the unpopular governor of San Luis Potosí, Los Reyes, which was accompanied by *gritos* for Santa Anna. Farther south in Tamaulipas a small band of rebels succeeded in holding its ground for a brief time. In the Mixteca country, General Juan Álvarez prevented a new movement among the Indians.[56]

---

[53] It would have been better to have captured Márquez as well as his troops. Vásquez and General Bustamante were severely criticized for allowing him to escape. Márquez was taken prisoner by Mejía in the course of his flight at Popotla but he was released on presenting his guarantee of safe conduct signed by Bustamante. Following his second escape he went into hiding. *El Siglo XIX*, February, 1849; *El Monitor Republicano*, February, 1849, for details and criticism of escape; Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 270–271; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 558–559.

[54] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 558–560; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 365–368.

[55] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 367, deplores the government's laxity in not exacting even more vigorous coöperation from state authorities in apprehending the leaders of these insurrections. In most cases the instigators escaped punishment.

Two incidents which occurred during the latter part of 1849 aroused much political interest and comment: the attack by *El Universal* on Hidalgo as a national hero and the forced resignation of the conservative *ayuntamiento* of the Federal District by a group of the more militant liberals led by Arista. Each year it had been customary to celebrate the *Grito de Dolores* of September 16, as the national birthday of independence. Bells were rung, parades were held, and speeches were given honoring the "Father of the Mexican Revolution." Hidalgo had always been referred to in the most glowing terms and had been painted as hero, martyr, and saint of the cause of freedom. No newspaper, party, or individual had dared to speak otherwise. Following the annual celebration in 1849, *El Universal* published editorials challenging Hidalgo's place in history and the accuracy of statements made by the chief speaker on that occasion, F. M. de Alaguíbel. The editorials further stated that Hidalgo and other early independence leaders were in truth little better than rebels making dangerous use of race hatred. These articles caused "a sensation among the masses, mild curiosity in the middle classes, satisfaction to the monarchists, and indignation among the republicans."[57] A violent press battle ensued between the republican press and *El Universal*. A number of petitions were sent by patriotic committees to Congress demanding that the conservative newspaper be sternly reprimanded. In the Chamber of Deputies a resolution was introduced to make an investigation of the affair to ascertain the facts. This resolution was defeated, however, because President Herrera and other party leaders felt that such action would infringe freedom of the press and would be construed as political persecution.[58] Quite out of proportion to its real importance the incident became a political and party issue.

---

[56] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 559.

[57] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 295; *El Universal*, September 17, 18, 1849. *El Monitor Republicano* replied promptly and with relish that the attack on Hidalgo, Morelos and other leaders of 1810 to 1820 was an "unparalleled crime" and that it was incredible that those who called themselves Mexicans could insult the nation and the nation's heroes in this fashion. It indignantly claimed that the articles had served "to lower national morale and pride" and had cast a shadow on Mexico's most glorious day.

[58] The measure was defeated by a vote of 39 to 32. The failure of the resolution to pass was hailed as a triumph by the opponents of the Herrera

The monarchists and conservatives claimed that all national and public figures and their acts should always be subject to scrutiny and criticism. They argued that if their deeds were meritorious, they had nothing to fear from the light of public analysis and discussion. The republicans held that it was nothing short of sacrilege to attack men whose place in history had already been appraised and who were recognized as national heroes and the founders of the republic. One of the most influential liberal speakers and writers, J. M. Tornel, defended Hildalgo *et al.* in a series of excellent articles. This affair evoked much heated discussion and criticism from both groups, but President Herrera observed a judicious silence. Strong support given by the conservative *ayuntamiento* of the Federal District to *El Universal* only made certain liberals, led by Arista, more determined to remove the present membership of the council from office.[59]

The *ayuntamiento*, which had been elected on July 22, 1849, was strongly conservative and monarchist in its composition. The leader of the conservative party, Lucas Alamán, was selected as president of the group. Unfortunately for the council, it used its influence occasionally in opposition to the liberal administration. This was particularly obnoxious to the truculent Arista. He had early decided that a strong, conservative *ayuntamiento* would be a stumbling block in his path to the presidency, which was an honor he hoped to attain in the national elections of 1850. An opportunity was afforded when the council supported *El Universal* in its uncomplimentary evaluation of the work of the early independence leaders; Arista then resolved to use all his influence either to oust the council from power or to make their situation so difficult that the members would resign their posts.[60]

---

government and *El Universal* gained unprecedented favor among certain elements of society. The Indians were very bitter against the newspaper.

[59] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 271–273. The conservatives branded themselves in the eyes of the Indians and the middle classes as lacking in patriotism.

[60] It was claimed that the aging Alamán had shifted from favoring a centralist republic to supporting a stable monarchy as the best form of government for Mexico. Other members of the council included the former minister of finance, Arrangoiz, Vásquez de León, both of whom later supported Maximilian, Manuel Ruíz de Tejada, Faustino García Chimalpopacatl, Luis Hidalgo Carpio and a dozen or so more. For complete list see Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 291–292; José C. Valadés, *Alamán*, 464. The author states that a more subtle and earlier attempt had been made by the administration to remove Alamán from the *ayuntamiento* by appointing him president of *Junta Liquidadora de Creditos* in July, but that Alamán had refused this post.

From the moment the *ayuntamiento* assumed its duties, it was roundly criticized by the more rabid liberals and the liberal press. It is only fair to say, however, that the council did foster many useful and needed public works.[61] In spite of considerable pressure from the Arista clique, the council remained in office for some time. Herrera, personally, took no part in this mild form of political persecution. It seems that neither he nor his Minister of Justice, Jiménez, realized to what lengths Arista would and did go to remove the council. Arrangoiz, former member of Herrera's cabinet and friend of the president, was an oustanding councilman.[62] It was no part of Herrera's makeup to play petty politics or to turn against a friend. Herrera apparently was in opposition to the methods used and came to be at odds with the leaders of his party on this question. Arista and others planned to bypass the president, using the liberal governor of the Federal District and their majority in Congress to accomplish their scheme. The Mexican historian Zamacois states that Herrera knew nothing of the planned skulduggery although it is difficult to believe that he had no idea of what was taking place.

> President Herrera and Minister of Justice José M. Jiménez, being honest men, suspected nothing. Arista did everything to assure success against his political adversaries. Those in power have only to hint at something and it is done, without compromising themselves. Lampoons and posters appeared on the streets, ridiculing the members of the *ayuntamiento*.[63]

As president of the council, Alamán had the legal right to appoint district supervisors of the municipal elections set for December 1, 1849. Arista decided to wrest this influential control from the conservatives and place it in liberal hands since the vote of the

---

[61] The council made noteworthy improvements in hospitals, schools, and prisons in the Federal District. One of the most commendable projects of the Herrera régime was that sponsored by the *ayuntamiento* of holding in the capital an annual exhibition, on November 1, of national products of industry, arts, and crafts. Needless to say, the fair excited much interest and served to encourage careful workmanship and individual pride in the product. Participation in the event was widespread and without party distinction. "Apuntes Biográficos de D. Lucas Alamán," p. 14, from the *Lucas Alamán Papers*, folder marked 1808–1849, in The University of Texas Archives. Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 303–305; Valadés, *Alamán*, 455–456.

[62] Herrera appointed both conservatives and liberals to his cabinet. Conservatives usually held the posts of Justice and Clerical Affairs and quite often that of Finance. This policy of Herrera's, though commendable, had aspects of both strength and weakness which are readily apparent.

[63] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 310–311; Arrangoiz, *op. cit.*, II, 301; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 592.

Federal District was most important in the later presidential elections in which he planned to be a candidate. He was supported in his plan by Minister of Foreign Relations Lacunza, General Benito Quijano and Governor of the District Pedro M. Anaya. On the day of the local elections, inflammatory handbills were distributed to the effect that the *ayuntamiento* was plotting to establish monarchy in Mexico. Rumors flew thick and fast that the mob was going to destroy the presses of *El Universal* and that members of the council would be attacked. The owner of the newspaper armed his employees and prepared to defend his property, but this proved to be unnecessary.[64] On the same day a petition signed by thirty-five people was presented to Congress to declare the elections null and void if carried out under the jurisdiction of the *ayuntamiento.* Discussion on the petition in Congress was heated and for the most part illogical. A vociferous gallery puntuated the debates with shouts of *"Viva la República"* and *"Mueran los Monarquistas."* The conservatives claimed that Arista had packed the gallery and had paid the mobsters with government funds to intimidate the Congress.[65] A vote on the petition passed the Chambers and Minister Lacunza ordered the suspension of the elections until further notice.

The high feeling and tension of the afternoon carried over into the night.

> About 12:30 a.m. that night, the mob ran through the streets, incited by the authors of the petition, shouting "death to the conservatives and monarchists," to the various members of the *ayuntamiento,* and to the editors of *El Universal.* Rocks were thrown at the home of Sr. Bonilla, a member of the council. Houses of the other conservatives suffered the same fate, among them that of the monarchist Dr. Nájera. The *léperos* continued without interference from the authorities.[66]

An angry note was sent by the *ayuntamiento* to Governor Anaya and Arista criticizing them for failing to keep order and for not providing its members with protection from these attacks. It also protested the meddling of the government in the local elections and the revocation of the council's "inalienable right" to appoint election supervisors. The council requested that Arista and Anaya inform President Herrera that in view of the circumstances the council must submit its resignation. Of course, Arista was elated over the result. The old council of 1848 was called upon by the

---

[64] *Ibid.*

[65] "Apuntes biográficos de D. Lucas Alamán," p. 14, from the *Lucas Alamán Papers,* Folder marked 1808–1849, in The University of Texas Archives. For details of mob activities see Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 731–732; Arrangoiz, *op. cit.*, II, 301.

[66] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 313–314; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 731.

Governor of the District to take over until the matter could be straightened out and new elections held, but it refused. Six months later nothing had been done to settle the issue or to select a new *ayuntamiento.*

Although Herrera might have favored a liberal council, he was not pleased with the tactics used or the embarrassment suffered by his administration over the unsavory episode. In his message to Congress on August 8, 1850, he took cognizance of the problem and requested Congress to delay no longer in investigating the legality of all the proceedings and to arrange for constitutionally held local elections. He added that if this matter was not cleared up shortly it would delay the holding of the national elections for the presidency and other federal offices in November.[67] As has been stated, Minister Jiménez was so incensed over this use of pressure politics that he resigned his post, being replaced by Marcelino Castañeda. The final result of this affair was the law of November 6, 1850, whereby the longstanding control of the local authorities in the municipal elections was taken from them. There was subsequently installed a strongly liberal body friendly to Arista's candidacy in 1851.[68]

In March, 1850, the capital was shocked by the brutal slaying of Juan de Dios Cañedo, member of the Chamber of Deputies. The assassin had slipped into his room in the *Hotel de Gran Sociedad* while Cañedo's servant was out for a walk.[69] This occurred on the same day March 29, that a mysterious fire in Sapo Street was allegedly set by Indian agents from Yucatán. The people were in a state of near hysteria and the government was charged with negligence in not providing adequate police protection for the city. Several weeks elapsed, and the murderer had not been captured. It was then that the accusing finger of the conservatives pointed at their arch enemy, Arista, in an effort to implicate him in Cañedo's death. The newspaper, *El Huracán,* issued a statement that Cañedo had threatened to expose Arista through the presentation of certain documents to Congress incriminating him and other members of the present régime in secret negotiations with the United States before the war to make a settlement involving the sale of Texas.[70] It was intimated that Arista had had Cañedo murdered to keep him silent. The main object of these accusations was to discredit Arista and to prevent his election as president. On May 22, *El Monitor Republicano* answered these charges and printed a denial written by the secretaries of the Chamber of Deputies that Cañedo had ever indicated that he desired to be heard in regard to such a matter or that he had highly important documents to present to Congress.[71] This was preliminary political strategy preceding the elections and few people took these charges seriously. Shortly thereafter, the confessed assassin was taken prisoner. His name was José María Avilëz of Temascaltepec, who pleaded insanity but nonetheless was convicted and hanged.[72] Although this satisfied most people, *El Huracán* continued to attack Arista and said that the wrong man had been put to death.[73] The affair demonstrated the intensity of feeling that accompanied national politics.

---

[67] "El general José Joaquín de Herrera, al abrir las sesiones extraordinarias en 8 de agosto de 1850," from *Informes y manifiestos,* I, 1850, p. 376. Herrera's rather weakly voiced opposition in this affair constitutes the most serious charge ever brought against him. It is doubtful, however, that a forceful attitude would have dissuaded the more radical liberals from their purpose.

[68] Law of November 6, 1850, in *Legislación mejicana,* 1850, pp. 214–215; Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 592.

[69] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 190. The deputy had been stabbed some thirty times with a white-handled knife found at the scene of the crime. Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 373. A professor of medicine at the National University was also murdered at about the same time, adding to the terror.

During the spring of 1850 dread cholera paid Mexico another deadly visit. Thirty to forty people died daily in Orizaba and also in Vera Cruz. The disease spread to the capital and Congress closed its sessions in order that some of the members could leave the city in an effort to escape. Once more the red and black banners indicating an epidemic floated over the capital. Funeral carts rattled endlessly through the streets. Business and legislation came to a standstill. Many notables died, among them Mariano Otero. Decrees were passed banning the sale of fresh fruits in the markets of Vera Cruz and finally, after some five months, the epidemic was brought under control. The only good thing that could be said of the disease was that it took people's minds off of politics, and the tension was eased temporarily.[74]

---

[70] *El Huracán,* May 11, 1850; Letter of W. S. Parrott, confidential agent in Mexico, to James Buchanan, June 10, 1845, from *Justin H. Smith Papers,* Vol. 6, p. 35. In support of *El Huracán's* contention, it might be mentioned that Parrott reported that he had been unofficially informed through his "indirect channel of communication" that Juan de Dios Cañedo had been sent to the United States to sound out the administration as to what sum would be given as compensation for the loss of Texas.

[71] *El Monitor Republicano,* May 22, 1850; the article was headed "Secretary of the Chamber of Deputies." ". . . As secretaries for the ordinary sessions of this year, we certify: That in none of the public or private sessions of the Chamber of Deputies during Easter did Cañedo offer revelations concerning Arista, nor did he indicate that he possessed documents incriminating him, nor did he ask any unusual session for this purpose. . . ." Signed by M. Gómez and J. R. Malo.

[72] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.,* IV, 190.

[73] *El Huracán,* May 30, 1850, made the statement that a Dr. Vanderlinden who had examined the body had said that Avilëz could not be the guilty man. *El Monitor Republicano* replied with a letter signed by Vanderlinden saying that he never had made such a remark.

Relations between the Herrera government and the state authorities were, for the most part, harmonious and friendly. At times, President Herrera found it necessary to resort to federal intervention, either to sustain the state officials or to correct state violations of the federal constitution. In Chiapas, the state legislature passed an unconstitutional act in April, 1848, which violated the principle of division of powers. Federal intervention was necessary and Congress declared this act null and void.[75] The most flagrant disregard of the constitution was shown by the governor of Zacatecas who dissolved the local legislature and defied the federal government. Herrera sent troops, restored the legislative body, and replaced him with the lieutenant-governor.[76] In San Luis Potosí and Tamaulipas, President Herrera aided the state governors to put down revolts aimed at their overthrow. There was difficulty in obtaining the approval of the three states concerned in the creation of the new State of Guerrero, particularly Michoacán, since it was necessary for them to cede provinces in its formation. A proposal to combine Nuevo León and Coahuila for administrative purposes was successfully resisted by these states. Most of the state governors quickly complied with federal requests for militia to suppress rebellion although the states were not so prompt in paying their share of the federal tax burden. Inability to raise the necessary funds or urgent local demands were the usual reasons for delinquency. President Herrera commented on the dealings of the federal government with the states as follows:

> Relations with the governments of the states have been generally good; the greatest prudence on the part of the national government, constant co-operation in maintaining local authority, and once or twice the energetic threat of the power of the federation in serious cases has produced this favorable result. . . . The power which the constitution gives to the president to execute general laws, requires many times the use of force, a thing which, when it must be exercised, brings about evils to which it is useless to refer. The federal government has often wished to be tolerant rather than resort to such an extreme, but tolerance has its limits. Sometimes it has

---

[74] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 196–197; 203; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, XIII, 739–740. Substitutes for some of the congressmen had to be appointed in order to proceed with the business of government.

[75] Article I of the decree of April 12, 1848, passed by the Chiapas legislature was defective. The federal Congress' nullifying act was passed September 22 of the same year. *Leyes y decretos mexicanos*, 1848, Doc. 149, pp. 386–387.

[76] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 732.

> been necessary to use the threat of force, and if by the grace of God it has not yet resulted in a civil war, this does not prove that it may not do so in the future.[77]

Herrera was of the opinion that unconstitutional acts of the states could be suspended by legal processes without resort to force and that if such a system were devised, it would be one of the best guarantees of stability.[78] At the close of his term Herrera was somewhat dubious in regard to a progressive understanding of constitutional processes. Speaking to Congress he said:

> For whatever constitution is beneficial, it is necessary that it be correctly understood and exactly observed, and it does not seem that we are very far advanced on this road.[79]

This was good advice and an honest observation, but the education of the people as well as of the political leaders to respect and understand constitutional government and democratic procedure was yet to be a long and slow process.

In Congress Herrera enjoyed a moderate liberal majority and, although Congress generally supported the administrative program, at times it proved to be rebellious. The chief criticism of the legislative body was that no sooner had it passed constructive measures, requiring an expenditure of money, than it was likely to revoke these acts by subsequent legislation. This made it particularly difficult for the ministers of finance and several of them resigned, charging Congress with indecision, obstruction, and lack of coöperation. Legislation dealing with military affairs, colonization, finance, religion, progressive development, foreign relations, and the like is covered under these various chapter headings elsewhere. There are, however, several decrees of a political nature worthy of consideration, not previously discussed. On September 2, 1848, a new electoral law was enacted which provided for holding the primary elections on October 8 of each year with state legislatures meeting on November 1 to count the votes. The law laid down qualifications for Congressmen and electoral procedures to be followed. The votes of the states were to be sent to the Chamber of Deputies for a final count and that body was to announce the results in early January [80]. This act was modified by decree of April 13, 1850, which changed the dates for primary elections and the voting of state electoral colleges to the second Sunday in August and October 4, respectively.[81] By a law of March 9, 1849, twenty-four federal judges were to be chosen by a plurality vote of the state legislatures every two years with the approval of the Chamber of Deputies before whom the judges took their oath of office.[82] On April 24, 1849, a general amnesty law was passed which applied to all those bearing arms against the Republic through April 12, with the exception of certain leaders and army officers, who were to lose their commissions.[83] In early 1850, a proposal was made to move the seat of government to Aguascalientes; this proposal failed to gain support.

---

[77] "Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso," p. 6.

[78] *Ibid.*

[79] *Ibid.*

[80] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 138, pp. 366–377.

During Herrera's presidency, several outstanding figures, some famous and other infamous, passed from the Mexican political scene. As already mentioned, Paredes y Arrillaga died in the summer of 1849, and Mariano Otero succumbed to the cholera epidemic. On September 24, 1849, General Manuel Rincón passed away.[84] In January, 1850, the former president and jurist, Peña y Peña, was buried, his "remains being accompanied to the grave by all classes, rich and poor alike."[85] General Valentín Canalizo died suddenly on February 20, 1850, after an illness of only a few hours.[86] President Herrera, who had been very near to death in 1847, was in very poor health throughout his term as Chief Executive and undoubtedly his exhausting duties in that capacity were a serious drain on his remaining vitality. One by one the familiar names and faces of the independence period were passing from the political picture. A new generation and a new cast of actors were to take their places on the Mexican stage following Herrera and the brief presidencies of Arista and Santa Anna. The year 1854—in which Herrera died, Santa Anna was overthrown for the last time, and the revolution of Ayutla began—marked the end of an era of political leadership and political thought.

The financial situation that confronted President Herrera and his various *Ministros de Hacienda* following the war with the United States was the gloomiest since independence. This situation, although made worse by the war, was a cumulative problem dating from the period of colonial dependency. New Spain had been a source of great revenue to the mother country under the efficient direction of Spanish viceroys, inspectors, and collectors. Treasure fleets carried gold and silver from Mexican mines and revenues from *alcabalas,* export and import duties, and sixty other different types of taxes to Spain. The greater portion of this wealth found its way to Europe to be wasted on the battlefields of that continent. Mexico profited little from her own natural resources, trade, and taxation. Eleven years of warfare for independence brought almost complete economic prostration. Leaders of the independent republic, therefore, turned to foreign nations for loans to cover the expenses of government. These were made at increasingly disadvantagous rates and discounts. Almost continuous revolution for twenty-seven years following independence had disrupted industry, commerce, and all progressive development. As a result, Mexico's financial difficulties increased rather than diminished. By 1848, Mexico's foreign debt exceeded seventy-six million pesos and the internal debt was so intricate and longstanding that no one was able to reckon it accurately.[87]

---

[81] *Ibid.*, 1850, Decree of April 13, 1850, p. 44.

[82] *Ibid.*, 1849, Decree of March 9, 1849, p. 109.

[83] *Ibid.*, 1849, Decree of April 24, 1849, p. 131.

[84] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 168. He was a prominent military and political figure, having been mentioned in several of the proposals for administrative triumvirates.

[85] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 550. "He had the reputation of being an excellent husband and father, a loyal friend, and an upright judge."

[86] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.*, IV, 187.

Unfortunately for Herrera and Mexico, no Hamilton or Limantour could be found to bring solvency out of bankruptcy. A wise use of the fifteen million dollar indemnity from the United States would have facilitated a reorganization of finances and a stabilization of the currency. However, these funds were dissipated in an effort to meet the immediate expenses of government and to pay the most pressing creditors rather than kept intact and used as capital for a national bank or invested profitably as a lump sum. Some twelve ministers of finance tried to cope with the impossible economic situation during the two and a half years of Herrera's administration to no avail.[88] Each in turn gave up in disgust and dismay after holding office a few days or at most a few months. Two of the ministers particularly distinguished themselves by holding the post for a six-month period. These were Piña y Cuevas and Manuel Payno. Bitter press criticism and lack of coöperation from Congress were other reasons for their resignations.

The fundamental basis of Mexico's political convulsions was the need for money and the lack of it.

> The key to the political problem was financial. Generals must be paid. Civilian politicians must be put on the government payroll. A place in the bureaucracy was in Mexico, the land of *empleomanía,* the chief object of middle-class ambition. Few persons who were not office seekers normally

---

[87] *Observaciones imparciales acerca de la administración financiera en la época del gobierno provisional,* 1845, pp. 1–73. This pamphlet was signed "Various Mexicans" and gives a detailed account of the factors contributing to the sad economic situation in Mexico through 1845.

[88] Piña y Cuevas, *Esposición del secretario de hacienda,* 1851, Num. 1, quoted in Callcott, *Church and State in Mexico,* 1822–1857, p. 206.

> concerned themselves with politics. Any government which could pay its generals and its bureaucrats could hold power almost indefinitely; an unbalanced budget meant revolution.[89]

Since the budget was never balanced, there was a perpetual state of revolutionary unrest. According to Francisco Bulnes, there was a revolution whenever the deficit was more than twenty-five per cent. During the war with the United States, expenditures were always more than double income.[90] With her ports blockaded and a vast portion of her country overrun Mexico could not even depend on the normal sources of revenue. At the beginning of Herrera's term only the faintest signs of life were visible in a paralyzed national economy.

President Herrera appointed Mariano Riva Palacio as Minister of Finance on the third of June, 1848. Ports were again opened to commerce, and a tariff of approximately 60 per cent of that of 1845 was levied.[91] It was considered advisable to reduce the tariff to discourage smuggling which was prevalent on a large scale. A common occurrence was for ships to lie outside the harbors until the masters had obtained a reduction in duty from the customs officials. If this was not granted, the cargoes were landed elsewhere on unfrequented parts of the low and accessible coast. Officials often made these concessions in order that the government would lose only part and not all the revenue through smuggling.[92] There was also some delay in turning over the customs houses at Matamoros, Mazatlán, and Guaymas to the Mexican authorities by the United States. The Mexican government claimed a loss of some seventy-four thousand dollars in customs due to this slowness in transfer. Although there was a difference of opinion as to the amount, the United States eventually paid these duties to Mexico.[93] Another problem concerning customs was that a large amount of merchandise, cottons, and tobacco had been imported into Mexico during the war. These articles were to be duty free, but merchants were ordered to declare the amount of stock on hand which had come in during this period. Many of the merchants and foreign corporations abused this concession by declaring many times the amount actually brought in, which would allow them the right to import the difference at no cost. It, of course, was most difficult for the Minister of Finance to prove the fraud.[94] Cotton and tobacco particularly were in competition with local products which made it worse.

---

[89] Parkes, *History of Mexico*, 178.

[90] For 1845–46, income was $10,700,000 and expenditures $25,200,000; for 1846–47, the figures were $10,200,000 and $24,300,000; for 1847–48, $10,400,000 and $21,600,000, and for 1848–49, the first year of Herrera's second administration, the amounts were $5,500,000 and $13,800,00 respectively. *Memorias de hacienda,* 1850, pp. 1–127; 1851, pp. 1–18.

[91] Decree of May 3, 1848 in *Legislación mejicana,* 1848, pp. 128–129.

[92] Minister Esteva confessed that honest officials who refused to accept anything less than legal payment were "often prejudicial to the interests of the government." *Memoria de hacienda,* April 4, 1851, pp. 100–102.

[93] Letter of James Buchanan, Secretary of State, to Luis de la Rosa, Mexican Minister to the United States, January 13, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.,* IX, 7. The United States claimed the sum due to be $68,500.18 while the Mexican claim was for $74,176.88.

Efforts were made to reduce the number of employees in the civilian and military branches of government in an attempt to curtail expenses. A decree of June 14, 1848, sponsored by Riva Palacio, was designed to reorganize the treasury department; to cut the civil service force and army list which were overpadded with excess and useless officials; and to prevent the expenditure of the United States' indemnity without the express approval of Congress.[95] It provided that the first three million of the indemnity could be used to pay the ordinary expenses of government. The consolidation plan, to be presented within three months, included pensions, overdue salaries, mileage for official travel, and numerous other items. All federal officials known as *agregados, auxiliarios*, and supernumeraries were to be dismissed at once and no money was to be spent beyond the amounts indicated in the estimates by the various departments. Gratuities, extra allowances, and pay during leave and the like were to be discontinued.[96] Arrangements with creditors were to be made against the tobacco revenues alone. The decree recommended that the excise, consumption, and municipal taxes of the Federal District and territories be replaced by direct taxes. All unneeded officers in the army and navy were to be given leave without pay unless they had served for a period of from ten to thirty years, in which cases compensation ranged from one-fourth to whole-pay pensions, depending on length of service. *Montepío* allowances were stopped except for wounded veterans.

The twenty-five articles of the decree were far-reaching and generally beneficial. Steps to reduce *empleomanía* had to be taken cautiously, owing to the revolt of Paredes and other political disturbances, for fear that the unemployed might join the revolutionary movement. General Nicolás Bravo with a noble gesture gave up the 30,000 *duros* in back pay owed to him by the treasury and said he would receive no future salary. He only asked that his family retain the right to *montepío* upon his death.[97] The size of the army was drastically reduced to 273 officers and 9,999 enlisted men. This greatly lessened the crushing expense of the war department, particularly since only slightly more than half of the ten thousand quota of men was subsequently raised by the states through voluntary enlistment. This action by President Herrera was considered to be one of the most courageous and beneficial steps ever taken by an administration in the history of the republic, since the army had been the source of most of the revolutionary instability. A proposal to make an adjustment with foreign creditors came largely as a result of British protest that the cession of lands to the United States had affected the landed security tendered their bondholders.[98] This reasonable demand was placed under advisement but a plan of settlement was not effected for another eighteen months.[99]

---

[94] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 218–219; Arrangoiz, *op. cit.*, II, 292.

[95] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 60, pp. 166–171.

[96] *Ibid.; Legislación mejicana*, 1848, Decree of June 14, 1848, pp. 162–168; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 560 footnote.

By a decree of June 29, 1848, a company was formed to provide for governmental monopolistic control of tobacco and to collect the various taxes on it for the government.[100] Provision was also made for the sale of tobacco imported during the war which had been stored in warehouses pending regulations governing its release.

Another attempt to save money was seen in the decree of August 10, which did away with Departments of Marine for north and south, and their functions were taken over by the military commandants of the areas concerned.[101]

In spite of some effected savings, needful expenditures exceeded original estimates. In addition to the usual expenses of running the government, the following sums were expended during 1848 for essential purposes. Two hundred thousand pesos were appropriated for the states of the interior to be used in reconstruction and protection against the Indians. Some of this money went to pay the states along the northern frontier for lands ceded to the United States. One hundred and fifty thousand pesos were voted to aid the whites in Yucatán against the Indians in their bitter race war. Two hundred thousand more were set aside for the repatriation of Mexican families in territories given to the United

---

[97] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 219–220. "This praiseworthy act by a patriot already distinguished in the war for independence, was justly praised, but the government refused to accept this sacrifice . . . ."

[98] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 560.

[99] *Legislación mejicana*, 1850, Decree of February 19, 1850, pp. 42–43. By this decree the Minister of Finance with the help of a Congressional committee was authorized to make a settlement with the creditors. Final arrangements were made by the law of November 30, 1850.

[100] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 71, pp. 190–191. There was much criticism of this arrangement particularly in the Vera Cruz region.

[101] *Ibid.*, Doc. 114, pp. 293–294. Decree of August 10, 1848.

States. Six hundred thousand pesos were paid to the firm of Manning and Mackintosh, British creditors, to cover the interest due on a five million dollar debt.[102]

By the middle of August it had become apparent to Riva Palacio and others that the budget could not be balanced. The minister was being subjected to daily criticism and many newspapers not only attacked his ability but also printed financial schemes of their own which, on paper at least, would seem to stabilize the financial situation. Expenses continued to exceed income, and the income and the indemnity payments which had been regarded so hopefully were seen to be insufficient to stem the deficit, being characterized as "a piece of bread to a father who had many children to feed."[103] Industry, agriculture, and commerce responded slowly to valiant efforts to stimulate them, adding to the minister's discouragement. After several unwarranted and unreasonably abusive attacks in the press, Riva Palacio resigned on August 10, 1848. On August 16 and 17, he appeared before the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate respectively and outlined the policies of his ministership, demonstrating the impossibility of the situation and pointing out his reasons for resigning.[104] The ranking member of the department, Sr. Huici, held the *ad interim* ministership until Antonio Icaza was appointed.

There was some discussion of adopting a financial plan similar to that used by the Spanish government during the colonial period. It was shown that such a scheme with appropriate modifications had been used by Lucas Alamán as Minister of Finance during the presidency of Bustamante in 1830–1832. He had been able to increase federal income to 17,000,000 *duros* and that of the states to 21,000,000 *duros;* this compared favorably to the most prosperous years under the viceroys. This idea was pressed by Alamán and Carlos María Bustamante, the creole writer and intellectual. Although Alamán was called upon for advice and to serve on several financial committees, the moderate liberals did not adopt this plan probably because it was of conservative inspiration.[105]

---

[102] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 85, for details.

[103] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 217. "As long as the head of the social body is heavier than the rest of the body, it has to go weakly along until it loses its balance and falls. . . . As long as expenses exceed income, the nation will go along aimlessly until it falls, destroying commerce, agriculture, arts and labor. For a ship to sail without fear of capsizing, there must be a proportional equilibrium of cargo."

[104] *Memoria de hacienda,* August, 1848, read to the Chamber of Deputies on August 16 and before the Senate on August 17, by Mariano Riva Palacio. The majority of the people were convinced that Riva Palacio had done his best under the circumstances. "Scrupulous in fulfilling his public duties, he always gave a detailed account of the funds he managed and on leaving the treasury, he left in it $1,300,000 of the $3,000,000 paid by the United States." Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 226.

The new minister was almost immediately the object of attack by politicians and press impatient for results. Being of a highly sensitive nature, Antonio Icaza resigned in less than a month. President Herrera then offered the post to Luis de la Rosa, former Minister of Foreign Relations under Peña y Peña, and to Juan Hierro, both of whom refused in view of the insurmountable obstacles the situation imposed. Almost frantic, Herrera turned to the lawyer, Manuel Piña y Cuevas, who accepted the task at the insistence of the president on the eleventh of September. Speaking of the rapid changes in the ministry and the ministers' frenzied efforts to find the solution to the financial chaos, the historian Bancroft has written:

> But what availed these—even with the addition of the accidental war indemnity—to provide for the demands of the reorganization and to offset the shrinkage in duty receipts and other sources? The perplexed ministers would make a superficial examination of the assets, clutch at more or less impractical suggestions for banks and mints, hint at further curtailment of expenses, which they would never enforce, cast furtive glances at the tempting church estates, and then unfold a budget or project, roseate with plausible recommendations to brighten the actual dark picture.[106]

One plan worthy of consideration was to induce the clergy, through concessions, to guarantee a new consolidated debt fund, and thereby link the Church as well as the creditors more closely with the interests of the nation.[107] Such ideas were only timidly proposed and most of the *moderados* were averse to antagonizing the Church. The clergy feared that such a step would only open the way for wider encroachment, and they would not even consider it. As a result, the great wealth and resources of the Church were left virtually untouched by government taxation. The following figures are given to show the economic status of the Church and its ability to pay federal taxes as well as the obvious necessity of its doing so. Church revenues totalled 127,000,000 pesos a year, of which 44,000,000 was from interest on loans and 61,000,000 from contributions. The clergy controlled one-third of the agricultural land of the nation, on which it paid no taxes. Ninety per cent of the mortages were held by the Church, and its real property netted 18,000,000 pesos a year. All told, its properties were valued at

---

[105] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 222–223.

[106] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 565; for details concerning extension of mints see full report in *Memoria de hacienda*, 1849, pp. 1–80.

[107] This plan was put forward later by Minister Esteva in a proposal, dated April 4, 1851, which would give to the clergy the control of new imposts for payment of interest on the debt.

300,000,000 pesos.[108] Failure to levy taxes on the wealth of the Church in fair proportion to its ability to pay and in the light of the extreme need of the government is the greatest criticism that can be made of the ministers of finance. Toleration of practical exemption of the vast revenues of the Church, many times that of the federal government, could only mean national financial ruin.

Piña y Cuevas selected a committee of six men as financial advisers. One of his acts was to grant twenty thousand pesos for the rehabilitation of the Academy of San Carlos which was in a sad state of neglect. To supply these funds he reëstablished the national lottery which afforded the government about one hundred thousand *duros* a year. Piña y Cuevas was not satisfied to use up the indemnity money to meet the needs of the moment. He saw clearly that this money should be kept intact, used and invested to bring long-range stability to the Mexican economy. With this in mind, he proposed the establishment of a National Bank. It was his plan to use ten million dollars of the remaining twelve million due from the United States as initial capital stock. This was to be supplemented with one-third of the annual revenue. He pointed out that customs as well as internal revenue had been mortgaged to the point of bankruptcy and that assignments were being made on payments of the indemnity before they had even been made by the United States. This, he said, although giving temporary surcease was the road to calamity. He also used the arguments of Riva Palacio to strengthen his proposal in Congress for the establishment of the bank.[109] It was stated that a bank would facilitate the handling of the government's business at a saving, with two-thirds of the revenues being disposed of through the bank.[110] He also felt that placing this money in such an organization would discourage rebels from trying to seize the government with the idea of gaining control of such a large sum even it was in the form of credit. The minister suggested that the creditors themselves manage the bank since they would have a definite interest in its efficient operation, while the government would appoint only an overseer to supervise its management. Paper money could be issued with the bank's hard capital as security. More money would be put into circulation. Further, the bank could assist the government in its reconstruction program by lending money at low rates of interest. This would free the nation from the *agiotistas*, or loan sharks, who had charged as high as three per cent a month. Mining, commerce, agriculture, and all forms of industry would be stimulated by being able to borrow money at reasonable rates. He called attention to the fact that the Bank of England had been set up with success on an even smaller capitalization than he proposed.

---

[108] Callcott, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

[109] A portion of Piña y Cuevas' speech in support of his bank bill is given in Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 231–233.

[110] *Esposición de hacienda*, February 14, 1849, pp. 3–4; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 360.

This was a vigorous defense of the bill and not without merit. Committees of Finance and Public Credit examined the bill and reported on it favorably to Congress in October. Congress, however, showed no interest in the bill. The only bank that was established was a savings bank which was opened in the *Monte de Piedad,* the national pawnshop.[111] President Herrera backed his minister in support of the National Bank and urged Congress to establish it in his speech to that body on January 1, 1849.[112] Congress, however, remained adamant.

A number of measures of lesser importance but worthy of note were passed during Piña y Cuevas' ministership. By a decree of October 6, 1848, a double quota was imposed on real estate and income within the Federal District.[113] The *alcabala* was abolished in the capital and a direct tax on merchants was substituted.[114] A law of November 14, restored to their rightful owners property and lands which had been seized by brigands during the foreign invasion.[115] Another interesting decree awarded the family of Iturbide ten thousand pesos for lands lost in Texas and California to the United States. Mariano Otero made a suggestion that roads leading out of the capital to various ports be federalized and that tolls be collected for their use. This measure was not passed, however.[116]

On October 31, Congress authorized the president to explore the possibilities of obtaining the next two instalments of the indemnity from the United States in advance in order to meet urgent expenses. This request was subsequently conveyed by Nathan Clifford, Commissioner of the United States to Mexico, to his government. Clifford recommended that this be done if at all possible to give the Mexican government every assistance to sustain itself.

---

[111] Arrillaga, *Recopilaciones,* 1849, pp. 76–89; *Memoria de colonización e industria,* 1849, p. 16.

[112] "El general José Joaquín de Herrera, al abrir las sesiones ordinarias en 1 de enero de 1849," from *Informes y manifiestos,* I, 356. He also observed that the Minister of *Hacienda* had presented a budget to Congress, which had happened only once in twenty-seven years.

[113] Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 565 and footnote.

[114] *Leyes y decretos,* 1848, Doc. 158, pp. 393–395. Decree of October 18, 1848.

[115] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 119.

[116] *Ibid.,* 119, 132.

> The policy is recommended, as it seems to me, not only as an act of justice to those who had the responsibility in ratifying the peace, but by every proper consideration connected with the prosperity and welfare of both countries. The present administration truly represents that class of opinion that made and consummated the peace, and is disposed to fulfil the stipulations of the treaty in good faith. . . . It is also the intention of President Herrera, I learn, to recommend to Congress important improvements with respect to their domestic policy, which, if adopted, will assimilate the institutions of the Republic more nearly to those of the United States. He appears to be deeply impressed with the nature of our institutions, and is sincerely desirous, I think, of copying them as far as he can be sustained by the public sentiment and the limited enlightenment of the people.[117]

Although the United States government was favorable to advancing the money requested, a new treaty would have had to be made with the approval of the Senate and the money would have had to be appropriated by Congress. These difficulties prevented realization of the proposal. However, the United States did agree to using the next instalment as security for an 800,000 peso loan.

Piña y Cuevas' budget of January 2, 1849, indicated the estimated departmental expenses and anticipated revenues for the coming year as follows:

Secretary of Domestic and Foreign Affairs	922,103 pesos
Secretary of Justice and Clerical Affairs	421,180 pesos
Secretary of Treasury (debts, legislature, salaries, pensions, etc.)	7,551,503 pesos 6 rs.
Secretary of War and Navy	7,685,733 pesos 6 rs.
Total Estimated Expenditure	16,580,520 pesos 4 rs.
Estimated Income	9,838,240 pesos
Estimated Deficit	6,742,280 pesos 4 rs.[118]

It was hoped that by practicing the most rigid economy the deficit might be reduced to some four million pesos. Piña y Cuevas also made an estimate of the internal public debt which he set at roughly 150,000,000 pesos and which was piling up interest charges at the rate of about 9,000,000 pesos a year, almost as much as total federal income. In view of this gloomy picture and primarily because of the failure of Congress to pass his National Bank bill, Piña y Cuevas resigned on March 16, 1849.[119] His work was generally applauded, and President Herrera accepted his resignation with reluctance.

---

[117] Letter of Nathan Clifford to James Buchanan, August 8, 1848, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 299–300. Apparently Clifford had been sounded on this plan before the Mexican Congress had given full authorization to President Herrera to enter into negotiations.

[118] *Esposición del ministro de hacienda,* January 2, 1849, pp. 5–8.

[119] *El Monitor Republicano* highly praised Piña y Cuevas for his work. He had always tried to keep enough money on hand to supply the government forces fighting Paredes and other rebels. His reputation for honesty was

Herrera next appointed Francisco de Arrangoiz, a capable conservative, as chief of the exchequer. In general, he followed the policies of his predecessor but accomplished very little. A law in April allowed the importation of foodstuffs into the northeastern provinces duty free which only encouraged fraud.[120] During May, Congress voted the customary expenditure of the indemnity payment due that month to be used for the expenses of public administration, thereby further frittering away the opportunity to use these funds for basic stabilization. Congress also voted to assign the customs from the ports of San Blas and Mazatlán to build roads from them to Guadalajara.[121] Arrangoiz did try to reduce expenses by lowering the salaries of federal officials from twenty-five to thirty-three and one-third per cent.[122] Being a conservative, Arrangoiz did not receive even as much support from Congress as had Piña y Cuevas. Matters continued to go from bad to worse.

On July 1, 1849, President Herrera called a special session of Congress to consider the questions of public finance. The president personally addressed the chambers at great length on this subject. He stated:

> . . . wealth is an instrument to be used to promote the national welfare in all branches of government; on it depends the weapons of defense, power, tranquillity and public peace. Many beneficent projects have to be foregone if sufficient funds are lacking.[123]

Herrera urged Congress to work out with the Minister of Finance some financial plan which would bring in additional revenue. He encouraged the levying of higher import duties, pointing out that slight increases in tariffs had not reduced the volume of imported articles. From July, 1848, to May, 1849, the president said that customs duties had amounted to 5,239,729 pesos and would have been even higher had smuggling been prevented. Herrera stated that the tariff could be used not only as a source of revenue but as a means to protect infant industry in Mexico. With this in mind he advocated higher tariffs on competitive goods while granting

---

so well known that he was able to obtain a loan of 76,000 *duros* without any security other than his name. This was paid on time. Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 252, 272–273.

[120] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 565.

[121] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 158.

[122] Arrangoiz, *op. cit.*, II, 298–300. For a lengthy review of the internal debt problem see pp. 308–312.

[123] "El general José Joaquín de Herrera, al abrir las sesiones extraordinarias en 1 de julio de 1849," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 360–361.

reciprocity in other cases.[124] Congress still remained befuddled and confused, debating instead of acting. In July, Arrangoiz admitted his efforts were hopeless and resigned.[125]

During the ensuing twelve months, President Herrera was forced to appoint five different Ministers of Finance, with Gutiérrez, Iturbe, Elorriaga, Ocampo, and Gutiérrez again following each other in rapid succession. None of these men held the office over three months. The dizzy rapidity of changes in the ministry was matched only by the accelerating deficit.

With the resignation of Arrangoiz, President Herrera had called on Bonifacio Gutiérrez to take the post. Gutiérrez possessed a long experience in financial matters and had an excellent reputation for honesty.[126] Reduction in the president's salary was to become effective at the close of Herrera's term but he insisted in September that he receive the smaller sum beginning immediately. For this and other generous acts, Rivera Cambas has written: "His memory will always be honored."[127] Not to be outdone, Congress declared that it would accept no salary nor would high officials be paid until the pensions of widows and disabled veterans had been defrayed.[128] Efforts were made to stop the ruinous contraband trade by authorizing the acquisition of two steamers and thirteen smaller vessels to serve as revenue cruisers and coast guard boats, patrolling the harbors and coasts of the Gulf and of the Pacific.[129] Lack of funds as usual prohibited fulfillment save in a small degree. An additional expense to the government at that time was the outfitting and paying of salaries of a boundary commission to survey the new line of the frontier as provided by the treaty of peace with the United States. Twenty-eight thousand pesos were appropriated for this purpose. Illness and criticism brought the withdrawal of Gutiérrez from the cabinet by the end of October.

Fernando Iturbe was next prevailed upon by Herrera to take up the problem of balancing the budget. His selection proved to be a very unwise decision. His political views were closely akin to those of the monarchists, and he ran into immediate opposition in Congress. When he appeared before the Senate to make a financial report, he was met by a heavy barrage of critical questioning and attack. Undoubtedly, he would have met the same fate before the Chamber of Deputies which was also opposed to his political ideology and policies. His position was untenable from the start, and he gave up in humiliation and disgust in less than a month, on November 11, 1849.[130]

---

[124] *Ibid.*, 361.

[125] Arrangoiz became a member of the conservative *ayuntamiento* of the Federal District with Lucas Alamán as its president on July 22, 1849. Later he accepted the post of Ambassador to France. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 566 footnote.

[126] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 291–292; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 566 footnote.

[127] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 167–168.

[128] *Ibid.*, 173.

[129] Arrillaga, *Recopilaciones*, 1849, pp. 134–135.

Iturbe was succeeded by Francisco Elorriaga after President Herrera had experienced some difficulty in finding anyone who would take the assignment. *El Monitor Republicano* commented on the situation on November 14, saying "it has become very difficult to find an honorable person who wishes to take over the office of *Ministro de Hacienda.*" Congress made a feeble effort to coöperate with the new minister, and by a law of November 24 limited administrative expenditures to a maximum of five hundred thousand pesos a month. Of this sum, the War Department was to receive 333,000 pesos; the Treasury, 61,273; Justice and Clerical Affairs, 18,993; Foreign Relations, 53,810; while Congress was given 33,482, and the Executive, 2,250.[131] The five foreign legations of the Republic received 54,000 pesos while consulates were limited to 17,000. This maximum limitation of 6,000,000 pesos a year did not include interest or payments on principal of the debt. Also, a number of army officers were dismissed and retired along with additional civilian employees. This law bred much discontent, and it was not long until the monetary maximums were disregarded. Continued low tariffs did not help the situation.[132] There was a great deal of opposition to the payment of direct taxes which resulted in evasion in many instances.[133] At the close of the year, Congress passed an excise tax, the proceeds of which were to go for public instruction.

President Herrera spoke to Congress on December 31, 1849, at its closing session. He was not too hopeful of the financial outlook which was far from satisfactory. Two years of peace, he was able to say, had seen Mexican export trade rise from nothing to 15,000,000 pesos a year. Although Congress had not been able to solve the financial crisis, he paid it a rather left-handed compliment by saying:

> . . . I believe that history, the only impartial judge of national leaders in the world, will be favorable to you.[134]

---

[130] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 308–309.

[131] Arrillaga, *Recopilaciones*, 1849, Decree of November 24, pp. 163–166; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 563 footnote; Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 309–310.

[132] Piña y Cuevas had estimated that the government had lost 2,000,000 pesos by tariff reductions from June to December, 1848. *Esposición del ministro de hacienda*, January 2, 1849.

[133] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.*, IV, 178.

[134] "El general José Joaquín de Herrera, al clausurarse las sesiones referidas en 31 de diciembre de 1849," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 366.

On January 1, Herrera addressed the newly-assembled Congress and devoted a portion of his speech to economic problems. He said that mining particularly had improved and was bringing in good returns. This industry should be further encouraged. Herrera stated that 8,000,000 pesos in taxes had been collected from June, 1848, to June, 1849, and that, during this period, the government had spent six million for regular expenses and five million in debt and interest payments.[135] He further noted the difficulty of the federal government in getting the states to pay their proportionate share of the tax burden. Congress was admonished to see to it that proper laws were passed to bring the states to the financial support of the administration. Their contributions during the past fiscal year had been something less than one million pesos. The president stated that it would be a policy of his administration not to hire any new employees and that if these were needed, retired personnel already on pensions would be used to save money. Herrera asked for simplified laws governing commerce and bankruptcy since the existing laws were complicated and contradictory. The president concluded his discussion of the economic situation with the assertion that "the state of the public credit is such, that any and all plans for a solution will be considered by the government."[136] In spite of the president's warnings and urgings Congress remained long on speech and short on arithmetic.

On February 12, Elorriaga proposed to reduce the tariff still further in an effort to prevent smuggling by making it unprofitable. This negative approach to the problem of contraband brought a corresponding reduction in customs receipts.[137] The demands of foreign creditors received consideration in the important law of February 19, 1850, by which Congress authorized the Minister of Finance to make an arrangement with these bondholders and set aside 900,000 pesos of the indemnity funds to make payments on interest and principal.[138] A special committee was appointed to aid the Finance Minister, and with the power granted by the decree of February 19, they were successful in working out a settlement with the British creditors which was advantageous to Mexico. The debt was consolidated and reduced at a stroke from seventy-six million plus to fifty-one million two hundred thousand pesos, a saving of twenty-five million pesos.[139] The amount of the reduced debt in pounds was listed in London as £10,241,650. British bondholders also agreed to cancel 7,680,000 pesos of interest and to reduce the interest rate on the remaining debt from 5 to 3 per cent. In consideration for this, the Mexican government gave a draft on the United States Treasury for two and a half million pesos with an assignment on customs receipts for payment of the interest as it came due.[140] This was truly an excellent arrangement of great benefit to Mexico. It was probably the most astute financial accomplishment of the Herrera administration. As far as the British bondholders were concerned,

---

[135] "El general José Joaquín de Herrera, al abrir las sesiones ordinarias en 1 de enero de 1850," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 369. These figures were probably incorrect.

[136] *Ibid.*, 370.

[137] *Memoria de hacienda*, February 12, 1850, pp. 8–9, quoted in Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 564 footnote. A maximum for government expenses was set at 350,000 pesos for February, 300,000 for March, and 250,000 for April as a result of the reduced custom receipts. These sums were not to be exceeded.

[138] *Leyes y decretos*, January, 1850, to December, 1851, p. 29. Decree of February 19, 1850; *Legislación mejicana*, 1850, pp. 42–43.

> Such concessions were not altogether liberal, in view of the prices at which most of these bonds had originally been bought. On December 1, 1849, bond sales were reported from a London house for £70,000 of Mexican bonds at from twenty-five and three-fourths to twenty-seven and one-eighth per cent of their face value. In other words, bonds nominally worth £70,000 had brought in only £18,662 10s. Three per cent interest on the face value would really mean well over eleven per cent on the actual amount of the money invested.[141]

Even in the light of these figures, however, the position of the Mexican government was much improved.

On March 1, 1850, Elorriaga resigned his portfolio, and President Herrera replaced him with Melchor Ocampo. Elorriaga had decided to withdraw when Congress refused to support his proposals on taxation and on the refunding of the public debt. The choice of Ocampo was criticized by the conservatives, not so much because he was a liberal as because he professed no religion.[142] About the only measure of any importance during his brief ministership was that passed on March 4, which attempted to classify the various types of internal debts under seventeen general headings. This classification was later used by Manuel Payno in his scheme of funding and consolidating the internal debt which he proposed in November of the same year.[143] A financial report made the middle of May revealed the background and complexity of the internal debt as well as the none too satisfactory terms of a convention entered into with the firm of Arrangoiz and Robertson.[144] On May 14, Melchor Ocampo relinquished his position in the cabinet, the immediate cause being Congress' proposal to allow a certain amount of grain to be admitted duty free.[145] Herrera at first refused to accept Ocampo's resignation; but when he presented his request a second time, it was granted.

---

[139] Payno, *Mexico and Her Financial Questions*, 23–25, quoted in Callcott, *Church and State in Mexico, 1822–1857*, pp. 206–207.

[140] Twenty-five per cent of import duties and seventy-five per cent of export duties from Pacific ports and five per cent of export duties from Gulf ports were set aside as a sinking fund for a period of six years. Thereafter, these were to be used to pay 250,000 pesos a year on the debt. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 560–561.

[141] Report on bond sales for Mexican Government, dated December 1, 1849, from *Manning-Mackintosh Papers*, quoted in Callcott, *op. cit.*, 207.

[142] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 371–372; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 731.

[143] *Legislación mejicana*, 1850, pp. 47–48.

The president then recalled Bonifacio Gutiérrez as Minister of Finance. Gutiérrez served only six weeks during the height of the cholera epidemic when sessions of Congress were suspended. The need for ready cash to meet the immediate expenses of administration was so great that a loan of 200,000 pesos was obtained from the house of Agüero, Mier y Terán, Iturbe, and Rosas at the exorbitant interest rate of two per cent per month.[146] Gutiérrez estimated that smuggling activities had reduced the anticipated customs receipts from eight to six millions. With no Congress to pass emergency legislation to meet the current crisis, Gutiérrez sent his resignation to the president on June 27, saying:

> Since Congress is absent, the government can do nothing; at least, the Minister of Finance cannot. Money is lacking even for ordinary expenses, and the government has no means for providing it . . . . All this can only be arranged through Congress, and if it does not meet soon, either the Republic will be bankrupt or it will have to violate the existing laws. Therefore, I beg to resign. The president knows the sacrifice I have made in accepting . . . . etc.[147]

Nothing could be more depressing to President Herrera than these financial difficulties and the seeming impossibility of securing ministers of finance with the wisdom and perseverance needed for the position. Herrera prevailed on the lawyer, Manuel Payno, to assume the burdens of the financial post after the loss of Gutiérrez. Payno presented a plan of suggested state taxes whereby the states could raise enough revenue to meet their usual needs of education, roads, prisons, hospitals, and the like and still be in a position to pay their ten per cent contingents to the federal government.[148] The states had continually plead inability to pay, and it was hoped to raise the amount of revenue realized from this source to over one million pesos annually. In the course of Payno's financial report to Congress for 1850, he listed the expenses of the Federal District, some of which follow as a matter of possible interest:

---

[144] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 198.

[145] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 378. The real reason was probably the difficulty of solving the problem of the public debt.

[146] Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.,* IV, 199.

[147] Letter of resignation of Bonifacio Gutiérrez to President Herrera, dated June 27, 1850, quoted in Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 388. Continued financial failure brought criticism from *El Universal,* which used this opportunity to advocate monarchy for Mexico.

[148] *Esposición del ministro de hacienda,* 1850, pp. 19–25.

Botanical Garden	2,800	pesos
School of Medicine	15,645	
Council of Public Health	2,500	
Grants to the *colegios*	36,000	
College of Mining	36,000	
Huehuetoca canal	12,000	
Grant to the National University	7,613	
Police	339,000	
Waterways, aqueducts and public fountains	15,000	
Upkeep of the Alameda and other public parks	12,000	
Lighting	46,000	
Canal dredging	3,500	
Colegio de Belén	480	
Insane hospital—women	2,600	
Ayuntamiento	5,600	
Paving and sidewalks	40,000	
Prisons	38,000	
Presidio de Santiago	22,000	
Hospitals of San Lázaro and San Pablo	24,000	
Hospital for prisoners	31,000	
Insane hospital—men	12,000	
Primary instruction	8,000	
Military College	92,000	
Academy of San Carlos	26,120	
Total	829,858	pesos[149]

The most notable effort of Payno's was in regard to his plan for consolidating the internal debt with uniform bonds at three per cent interest. Encouraged by the success of the arrangement with the foreign creditors, he persuaded Congress to enact his measure in the law of November 30, 1850.[150] Under this law, an assignment of twenty per cent of the customs duties was made to meet the three per cent interest payments, with an annual redemption of three hundred thousand pesos. All creditors had to present their claims for review to determine legality. Bondholders in the nation were given six months to convert their old bonds to the new issue while those in foreign places were given twelve months to effect conversion. Creditors who failed to accept the new plan were to be disregarded for a period of ten years and non-classified credits were placed in the same category.[151] A special council was selected to manage the consolidation program and to appoint agents to supervise the collection of customs to insure honest administration of the funds. The creditors stood the expense of agents and council.

---

[149] *Ibid.*, 64–65. The small amount listed for primary instruction is due to the fact that primary education was under the control of the church schools.

[150] *Leyes y decretos*, 1850. Decree of November 30, pp. 157–158.

[151] *Ibid.*, 157 ff.; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 561 and footnotes.

The new bond issue was set at forty million pesos, "leaving an extorted gain for the treasury of nearly thirty millions."[152] Rather arbitrary discounts were imposed on the various classes of debt, some of which were as follows: On debts dating prior to independence, half of the capital and eighty per cent of the interest were cancelled. Twenty per cent bonds lost all interest and a million and a half on the principal, receiving in return five hundred thousand pesos from the indemnity payments due in 1851–1852. The copper fund and loans to the government at not above legal interest remained at par, payments to be met equally from new bonds and indemnity. Debts due employees of the government were to be honored at eighty per cent of original value if in original hands or those of heirs. If in the hands of speculators, only fifteen per cent would be paid. Debts due on administered property were not to carry more than six per cent interest and the principal was to be paid with seventy per cent in new bonds and thirty per cent from the indemnity. As to the war debt, forty per cent was to be met from the indemnity and sixty per cent from the new bond issue. Claims of wounded veterans and benevolent institutions were listed at par.[153] There were many other categories too numerous to mention.

Payno was gleeful, for his idea was a good one. However, through lack of adequate data, he had underestimated the total of the debt. Other difficulties were that there was not enough surplus from the indemnity to meet the demands upon it assigned by law and the undependable customs receipts were already heavily mortgaged.[154] When the doubtful prospect of guarantee was known to the creditors, there was widespread opposition to the partial repudiation. Payno defended his plan and said that it was workable if all would coöperate. He claimed that consolidation eliminated much of the financial confusion by revealing the extent of national indebtedness. The law also destroyed jealousy between the different creditor groups, procured a gain for the treasury, put more money into circulation, and united personal and national interests.[155] Fear of further repudiation caused continued complaint from creditors,

---

[152] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 562.

[153] *Legislación mejicana*, 1850, pp. 233–260.

[154] Indemnity requirements were 5,995,000 pesos while the actual surplus amounted to only 4,000,000. Esteva's *Exposición de hacienda* of March 28, 1851, gives these figures and criticizes the law as a blow to the national credit since it admitted the nation's state of bankruptcy.

> notably by the clergy and by foreigners under ministerial protection, and the plan had to be modified and infringed in a number of cases, thus defeating its main object.[156]

A more sensible plan to effect the reorganization of the treasury and the consolidation of the internal debt would have been to make a drastic curtailment of expenses and to levy new taxes necessary to meet the demands of the new funding law. The administration apparently feared to add new taxes since this would probably have brought further *pronunciamientos* against the government. In his final speech to Congress before retiring from office, President Herrera praised Payno's plan of public credit, saying that although "some protests have been made against certain articles of the law by the representatives of friendly nations," he felt sure that they could be handled with satisfaction to all concerned.[157] He stated that in spite of the deplorable economic condition of the country, industry, commerce, agriculture, and mining had flourished, the latter having produced thirty million pesos in minerals during the past year.[158] The president reviewed the whole economic program of his administration, criticizing some aspects and praising others. He said the chief concern of Congress should be to find new methods and ways of increasing federal income since:

> According to the lowest estimates, and in times of peace when extraordinary expenses do not exist, the needs of the government, including the payment of the reduced debt, will amount to approximately ten million pesos annually, and the national revenues do not yet supply that sum.[159]

Herrera warned that if national income were not raised to meet annual expenditures, certain destruction of credit and the economic life of the nation would follow. Exhorting Congress to action, as he had tried to do many times before, he said:

> This is today truly the reef on which the State will wreck itself, or the remedy which will cure its ills. The question is life or death, and that quickly. The government, judging by what has happened before, hopes that the patriotism

---

[155] *Memoria de hacienda,* June 30, 1852, pp. 14–16. Payno resented any modifications of his plan, and herein answered the criticisms of Esteva made in 1851.

[156] Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 563.

[157] *Discurse pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso,* 4.

[158] *Ibid.,* 9–10. By December, 1850, creditors had been paid sixteen and a half million pesos. Most of the money, unfortunately, went out of the country.

[159] *Ibid.,* 19.

> of the legislative body will not permit itself a moment's rest until it has found a favorable solution to this problem.[160]

In summary, the accumulated financial difficulties inherited by the Herrera administration, dating from the days of the viceroys to the tremendous financial burdens of the war with the United States, proved more than a dozen ministers of *Hacienda* could surmount. The desire of Congress to control the expenditure of the indemnity payments had resulted in the failure of the National Bank bill. This money had been spent piecemeal and was, therefore, of no real help in effecting a permanent solution of the financial problems. Really, the only major accomplishment which could be claimed was the consolidation, reduction, and funding of the foreign debt.

> To the nation at large these repeated failures to meet national debts promptly had never been considered serious, but to the stability of any given administration, such a policy was necessarily fatal sooner or later.[161]

In view of this fact, it was almost a miraculous feat for President Herrera to have completed his constitutional term and turned over the reigns of government to his constitutionally-elected successor. In order to appreciate fully the problems of finance facing Herrera, it should also be remembered that Mexico did not attain a balanced budget until the period of Porfirio Díaz, when the introduction of foreign capital in industry and the genius of Limantour accomplished that long-cherished dream for the first time in 1894.

---

[160] *Ibid.*

[161] J. N. Adorno, *Análisis de los males de México*, 12–13, 71, quoted in Callcott, *op. cit.*, 208.

CHAPTER IX

Racial Warfare

One of the most critical questions confronting President Herrera upon his reëlection to the presidency was that of the bitter and sanguinary war of races in Yucatán and along the northern frontier. This infection soon spread to endanger the states of Querétaro, Guanajuato, San Luis, and even the state of México. The most unfortunate, the most destructive, and oftentimes the most stubbornly-fought conflicts are those of an intra-provincial or civil character. Added to the civil aspect of the Mexican conflict was the element of race hatred engendered by centuries of unequal opportunity. Since the days of Cortés, the Indian had occupied a subordinate and almost servile position. Three centuries of Spanish maladministration had not improved the condition of the Indian masses. During these years, the Indian had felt, suffered, thought, and sometimes hoped. The outbreak of hostilities in 1810 had unfortunately turned into a race war in spite of Hidalgo's best efforts. However, it put the problem of political and social justice for the Indian squarely before the nation. Morelos and Guerrero had carried on the struggle with varying success. When independence was finally won, the Indian had been granted equal political opportunity and racial equality by the *Plan de Iguala*. At long last it appeared that the Indian had been recognized.

The independence of Mexico, however, did not bring the expected liberation of the Indian masses from social and political inequality, stratification, and oppression. He soon became the proverbial "forgotten man" and was allowed to return to his slough of despondency. For the most part, those once-proud descendants of the Mayas, Aztecs, and Toltecs bore their burdens stoically and patiently. Although there were occasional festering outbreaks, there was no large-scale revolt such as occurred during the independence period or in 1540–1542, in the so-called Mixtón War, when the Indians of the Mixteca area rebelled against the first viceroy, Antonio de Mendoza.[1]

After independence, a real opportunity presented itself to raise the masses and to eliminate the race feeling which had registered a potent force in Mexican politics. A wise and non-partisan national policy of social and economic rehabilitation at that time might have saved the nation many a future headache. Instead, Mexico's chronic evil, party strife and political instability, served to emphasize racial prejudice and racial problems. The Indians turned from one to the other of the military politicians in the hope that the overthrow of the existing government would bring the panacea for their many ills. Uniformly the paper promises of these *caudillos* were puffs of air, and the longed-for leader in the person of a Benito Juárez or a Francisco Madero failed to appear. There was, however, a new delineation of classes after 1821. Two groups, in place of the three divisions preceding the revolution, consisted of (1) the Indians and the lower class *mestizos* and (2) the higher *mestizos* and those of pure Spanish blood. In the formation of this second group, "vanity on the one hand and policy on the other"[2] were motives for the union. It was largely the case of the wealthy French bourgeois merchant's daughter marrying the penniless son of titled nobility, a union obviously advantageous to both. Thus, the old feeling of racial, social, and political discrimination continued in different proportion but the same in practice.

---

[1] Priestley, *op. cit.*, 59–60.

Some conditions, nevertheless, did contribute toward keeping the peace. The Catholic religion had been something of a soothing sedative that helped hold all classes together, "assuaging among the oppressed the bitterness caused by the oppression."[3] Religion, therefore, was one of the forces that aided in maintaining peace but at the same time indirectly served to perpetuate the evil. Another bond which tended to retard inevitable retribution was that the *mestizo* group now was divided and had members in both gradations of society. The wide dispersal of the Indian tribes and their own inter-tribal jealousies also prevented common action. Still another consideration was the gradual absorption of the Indian population through marriage. On the other hand, in many sections of the country, the Indians remained as an unchanged entity, and it was from these areas that trouble might be expected. Such an area was Yucatán, where racial feeling was to reach the heights of blind fury during the war between Mexico and the United States and during the period of governmental impotence that followed.

Yucatán, along with practically all of the other states, had rebelled against the central government when Santa Anna overthrew the Federalist Constitution in 1834. Revolts in these states had been suppressed with the exception of Yucatán and Texas. From that time on Yucatán had remained more or less independent and outside the pale of the Mexican Union. In order to secure the support of the Yucatec Indians against the central government, various promises had been made to them by the local authorities, among which was exemption from certain taxes. After the immediate danger had passed, the Yucatán authorities forgot their promises, and burdensome taxes were levied. Another cause of discontent lay in the fact that the Indians had been selling their lands to the British in Belize; this was resulting in gradual British possession of the area. Measures were taken by local officials to prevent this from happening, to the dissatisfaction of the Indians and the British speculators.

---

[2] Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, V, 576.

[3] *Ibid.*

Chaotic conditions resulting from the conflict with the United States gave the Indian leaders their long-awaited chance to wage a war of extermination against the whites of the Yucatán peninsula. Yucatán showed her independence by not declaring war on the United States which, in turn, recognized Yucatán's neutrality, and the Indians knew that the whites could expect no help from neighboring Mexican states which were concentrating their efforts to repel the invaders. The Mexican government had its hands full fighting a defensive war on three fronts, and its limited supply of men and munitions precluded the possibility of giving any real aid to Yucatán as long as the war continued. In spite of these conditions, the Yucatán officials sent insistent appeals for help stating that if some assistance was not forthcoming, the white population would be exterminated or swept into the sea. The whites in their extremity seemed to have forgotten that they had refused to recognize the sovereignty of the central government over them in the past and that their appeals might be a bit inappropriate. However, the central government would have given the desired support had it been able to do so.

Racial incompatibility in Yucatán had reached a crisis in 1847. The intensity of feeling revealed that the unappeasable hatred of the Mayas toward their Spanish conquerors of colonial days had, if anything, increased rather than diminished. In recent years, the Indian *caciques,* or chieftains, had been invited at sundry times to aid one party or another in the civil wars that were incessantly taking place. It was in this wise that many Indians were schooled in the use of the weapons of war and many of their leaders, such as Antonio Ay, Cecelio Chí, and Antonio Pat learned the science of warfare. Probably one of the first mistakes of the Yucatán government was to allow these leaders to go unpunished after having taken part in an *émeute.* Their part in it was common knowledge, but no attempt was made by the authorities to apprehend the offenders.

> It was probably this impunity that stimulated them to plan a conspiracy to deluge the country with blood, and to sow devastation throughout its lengh and breadth.[4]

These plotters were joined by a notorious murderer, Bonifacio Novelo, of Valladolid, and their acceptance of him indicated the lengths to which they were willing to go.

This nucleus group had its first meeting to discuss revolutionary procedures aimed at the independence of their race at the *rancho* Xihum, which is about 16 leagues from Tihosuco and an equal distance from Valladolid. The *caciques,* Ay and Chí, were present at the meeting, although Pat may not have attended. Chí was the most bloodthirsty and urged total annihilation of the whites by fire and sword. Ay was more moderate and felt their objective could be accomplished without much bloodshed. He urged that a strong and determined show of force would intimidate the whites and a satisfactory arrangement could then be made. Pat, on the other hand, wanted the Indians to be the dominant race from the political, social, and economic standpoint, but he professed no desire to exterminate or expel the whites from the peninsula.

When the government learned of this subversive movement and of the meeting at Xihum, the officials had Ay arrested and executed at Valladolid on July 26, 1847. The two other ringleaders escaped capture, but many other lesser lights were taken and rather harshly treated. As might be expected, Indian retaliation was immediate. On July 30, Chí struck the first blow, when the town of Tepich was attacked at night while all were asleep. The *mestizos,* mulattoes, and whites were brutally murdered as they slept. Only a few of the women were spared for passionate indulgence. One man, the lone survivor of the massacre, carried the gruesome story to Tihosuco.

The rebellion soon spread to the south and east. There were several fiercely fought engagements in which the Indians were defeated, but none were decisive battles or did much toward bringing the war to an end. The methods adopted by the government and employed against the aborigines were most severe. Indeed, they set up an "inhuman system of persecution, which only helped to swell the ranks of the insurgents, and to increase their animosity."[5]

The insurrection soon became so general that the government with its meager military forces could not cope with the situation. There was a general exodus of people from homes in the interior and from the outlying settlements to the north and east. Relief came from an unexpected quarter. In this dark hour, arms and ammunition were sent to the beleaguered whites by the Spaniards in Cuba.[6] Spanish warships in the vicinity also performed valuable service by carrying hundreds of families to places of safety. Even so, arson, murder, and the merciless pillaging of the countryside had all but driven the whites into the sea when Herrera took the oath of office as President of Mexico for his second term.

---

[4] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 537; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 714.

[5] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 537.

One of the first acts of President Herrera was to send troops and money to the Governor of Yucatán as soon as these could be made available, although of necessity not in adequate proportion.

> When the government [Mexico] was free from the necessity of soliciting money and troops to fight against the army of the United States, it hastened to send both to the unfortunate inhabitants of Yucatán, whose condition was becoming progressively more critical. The burning of towns and villages and the wholesale murdering of whites continued with the greatest fury. There was nothing to restrain the savage hordes.[7]

While the Mexican Congress at Querétaro was busily engaged with the details of ratifying the treaty of peace, the Indian forces in Yucatán were driving the whites from Sacalum, Ticul, Izamal and neighboring towns which were given over to the flames. The small number of white troops available for defense were poorly equipped and seldom paid. The exigencies of the situation even demanded that the jewels of the temples be confiscated, and an effort was made to sell them in Cuba to provide funds for carrying on the unequal struggle.[8]

The whites were outnumbered at least three to one. Atrocities and barbarities, reminiscent of Indian frontier warfare days in the United States, were committed by the Indians. One of the Indian prophets encouraged the slaughter by saying: "Your feet will be bathed up to the ankles in the blood of the whites, our oppressors."[9] Sympathy for the whites was aroused throughout Mexico and even in some parts of the United States. News was eagerly awaited of recent developments which was brought in mail and newspapers to Vera Cruz by packets. In late June, the ship *Constante* arrived in Vera Cruz from Campeche with issues of the *Boletín de la Patria* which stated that the

---

[6] "President Herrera's government appreciated the aid given by Spain, and the central government later paid Spain in full for the arms and munitions furnished the Yucatán government. *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 8. The Spaniards also had the motive of spreading the idea of Pan-Hispanicism and of regaining some of their lost influence in the New World. For details see José de Arboleya, *España y Méjico*, I, 104, 111–112.

[7] Zamacois, *Historia de Mexico*, XIII, 155; for additional details, see Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 580–583.

[8] The church jewels and gold and silver vessels were shipped to Cuba, but none of the prospective buyers in Havana dared purchase the stolen plunder. Eventually, they found their way to New York where they were bought by people with no particular conscientious or religious scruples. Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 155, 240. Efforts were made later to have them returned.

[9] *El Siglo XIX*, June 30, 1848. The article stated that 11,000 refugees had flooded into Mérida, which was also in danger of immediate capture.

> Indians have committed acts of great horror and the barbaric conduct of these savages cries out for vengeance. The beautiful temple [of Ticul] has been profaned in the most audacious manner. Each day gives new proofs of the brutal ignorance of these savages, who are condemning to destruction all that is dear to the eyes of civilization.[10]

In New Orleans an armed group of sympathizers was organized under the leadership of several retired and exiled Mexican army officers. They planned to go to the aid of the whites and "give the Indians a lesson in valor." However, when this expedition arrived in Vera Cruz, the commandant-general refused to let them proceed further since it was an armed expeditionary force without legal authority.[11]

In June, Yucatán sent two commissioners, Regil and Rejón, to Mexico City to solicit aid from President Herrera. Herrera indicated the utmost interest in their plea and promised initial assistance in the amount of thirty thousand pesos and two thousand rifles.[12] "Committees for Aid to Yucatán" were organized in Mexico City, Vera Cruz, New Orleans, and New York. *El Arco Iris* of Vera Cruz, attempting to raise funds, stated that "without help all the whites of Yucatán will perish."[13] One resident of that city purchased five hundred rifles for shipment to the peninsula. The Herrera government aided the whites not only to save them from destruction but also in the hope that Yucatán would return voluntarily to the Mexican federation.[14] Later in the year, she did take this step as much for the protection afforded by the Herrera administration as for the fact that the Constitution of 1824 had been reinstated.[15]

Meanwhile, the whites were being compressed into restricted areas along the Gulf coast and the Island of Carmen was becoming a refuge for thousands of homeless people.[16] Although the great majority of Mexicans breathed a sigh of relief when the United States forces began to evacuate their positions in accordance with the terms of the treaty, the inhabitants of the Island of Carmen and Yucatán urged that the American troops remain as a protection. The more immediate concern, namely, self-preservation, had made friends and benefactors of their former enemies. On June 6, 1848, the authorities of Carmen, fearing complete annihilation, sent a petition to Commodore Perry, commander of the American occupationary force, explaining the condition of the whites and the dire consequences to them of an American withdrawal. It was requested that ". . . he order the forces under him not to evacuate this island until the Mexican government is in a position to provide for its security and defense."[17]

---

[10] *Boletín de la Patria*, June 8, 1848, quoted in *El Siglo XIX*, June 29, 1848.

[11] *El Siglo XIX*, June 31, 1848.

[12] *Ibid.*, July 2, 1848; Eligio Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán*, IV, 178–202.

[13] *El Arco Iris*, June 28, 29, 1848.

[14] Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 357. "El gobierno logró que aquella peninsula volviera a formar parte de la Federación."

[15] "El general José Joaquín de Herrera, al cerrar las sesiones del congreso en la capital del país, el 2 de noviembre de 1848," from *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 355. Herrera told Congress that Yucatán had returned to the Union during the summer due to the danger that threatened her and because the present government represented a constitutional régime based on federal principles.

A copy of this letter was also sent to President Herrera in order to emphasize the seriousness of the situation and to show the honesty of the Yucatán government's motives in requesting foreign aid. A great number of *émigrés* arrived daily from the mainland, left homeless and often destitute of all worldly possessions. They brought with them a "ravenous hunger and a lamentable poverty." By way of further justification to the Mexican government for their appeal, the Yucatán authorities added:

> Yucatán, far from being able to give the inhabitants of the island the help they were seeking, was itself asking for aid from a country that was in a position to give it in the name of humanity and civilization. Such an unfortunate State, worthy of a better fate, will soon be entirely overrun by savages if a generous hand does not lend it a swift and effective aid.[18]

Another important item was the customs house which up to that time had been administered by the United States authorities and would now revert to the Yucatán government as provided under the treaty. The expected revenue from this source was depended upon to help turn back the enemy. However, if the American troops withdrew, even this last source of funds would be dried up if the Indians captured the island—which was extremely likely unless outside assistance was received. The Yucatán petitioners, in an effort to quell possible Mexican fears of permanent occupation by the *norteamericanos,* added that "the supreme government of Mexico, as the petitioners understood, could not consider the temporary occupation they were requesting other than in the light of necessity and the right of self-preservation."[19] However, they would be perfectly willing that the termination of American occupancy be left to the discretion of Herrera's government as soon as Mexico could effectively take over the added burden. It was also pointed out that by remaining, Commodore Perry could save for Mexico a very important port on the Gulf which was of the utmost strategic and geographical importance.

---

[16] The island is located off the northeast coast of Yucatán in the Gulf of Mexico. It has a surface area of about 346 square leagues and at this time a population of approximately 12,000 persons. The capital of the island was El Carmen and sheltered about 3,000 souls from Indian attacks. Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 171.

[17] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 171.

[18] *Ibid.,* 172.

Most of the Mexican leaders were favorable to this suggestion and realized that foreign aid was needed since President Herrera and his cabinet could not solve all the problems facing the nation simultaneously. The dilemma was this:

> It was the necessity of choosing between the burning and pillaging of the barbarous Indians and the temporary but protective dominion of those who, by the treaty, had ceased to be their enemies. Therefore, those who, instead of gathering around the new administration to sustain it in its program of social regeneration, had raised the standard of rebellion, thus hindering the sending of troops and all the indispensable aids to relieve the fearful situation of their compatriots in Yucatán—these men were truly guilty.[20]

On June 25, 1848, a large number of the American troops sailed from the Island of Carmen, but a garrison of 350 men was left as a protection for the inhabitants against the Indians. This arrangement received the approval of both Mexican and United States authorities.

The Herrera administration went even further in its efforts to secure aid from the United States. A Mexican special commissioner to the United States, Arrangoiz, presented his credentials to the Department of State on August 3, 1848. He was instructed by President Herrera to state:

> . . . it was his government's desire that the United States furnish to Mexico three or four thousand troops, to be employed, in the first place, against the Indians of Yucatán, and if need be, against the Indians of other portions of Mexico. In case of necessity, they would, also, be employed to sustain the present government against the revolutionists. Mexico in turn would provide these troops with the same salary and rations as received by troops of the United States. Funds supplied by the first indemnity payment under the treaty would be set aside for this purpose.[21]

This request, however, could not be granted. The American President did not have the right under the Constitution to employ the armed forces beyond the limits of the United States. Had this provision been incorporated into a treaty, it could not have obtained at that time the necessary two-thirds vote in the Senate. The idea, therefore, had to be abandoned by President Herrera. It was, however, an indication of trust on the part of the Herrera government and showed that the administration in Mexico looked to the United States for military as well as moral support, as a friendly and sympathetic neighbor rather than as an aggressive domineering conqueror.

---

[19] *Ibid.*, 173.

[20] *Ibid.*, 175; Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán,* IV, 178–202, for details of struggle in Yucatán.

[21] James Buchanan to Nathan Clifford, August 7, 1848, quoted in W. R. Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, Mexico, 1848–1860,* IX, 4.

Meanwhile, the boats arriving in Vera Cruz from the peninsula brought increasingly bad news while on their return voyage they carried what little aid had been made available.[22] One letter from the residents of Campeche to President Herrera described the sad picture as follows:

> It would be necessary to renounce all human feelings not to burst into tears at the sight of thousands of families begging bread, families who a short while ago were wealthy, their fortunes lost forever; young girls, innocent children, unclothed and hungry running through the streets, aged priests, grown old in the holy ministry, seeking but not finding a place to rest their weary bodies. If some outside force does not restrain this overwhelming flood of Indians, in two months at the most, Yucatán will be stricken from the catalogue of civilized nations.[23]

Toward the end of the year, the tide of battle began to shift. The whites in Yucatán were able, as a result of the aid given by Spain and President Herrera's government, to take the initiative against the Indians. The aborigines were gradually driven back from the coast, and many of the *émigrés* returned to their homes. Bolonchenticul was retaken by government troops on August 26 and Eklun the following day. Tibolón and Tacchenichen were occupied in September, as were Cacachen and other towns of importance. The crowning accomplishments of the campaign of 1848 were the recapture of Valladolid and Tihosuco. This feat gave to the whites possession and command of the Gulf coast of the peninsula. The Indians were forced back into the interior south and southeast of the central mountain region. There, the three chieftains, Florentino Chan, Cecilio Chí, and Jacinto Pat divided the command of the area remaining to them. Chan controlled the east, Chí commanded the center, and Pat directed activities in the southern district.

An effort was made by the whites to press their advantage, harrassing the enemy at all times and at all points. The fight was taken to the enemy, and new cantonments or outposts were established to hold newly-acquired territory. The revolutionists were pressed within ever narrowing limits in an attempt to suffocate the opposition. This plan of increasing pressure met with some success for the whites in the vicinity of Valladolid although greater resistance was encountered near Tihosuco. The vicissitudes of fortune soon again favored the Indians who laid seige to Tihosuco and to the new outpost of Saban.[24] The siege was continued in spite of several efforts to relieve the besieged, and the stubborn resistance by the Indians in this region encouraged their allies in the north to attack Valladolid. Thus did the war of races in Yucatán ebb and flow for the next two years. The Herrera government sent a total of one hundred and fifty thousand pesos and a limited number of men and supplies during 1848. This amount was gradually increased at the personal instance of President Herrera to sixteen thousand pesos a month.[25] The Indians could have been subjugated quickly with sufficient support from the central government, but Herrera was forced to direct his main efforts toward putting down the revolts of Paredes, Jarauta, and Leonardo Márquez in order to maintain his own administration. If the central government were not upheld, complete chaos and ruin would have befallen the nation.

---

[22] *El Arco Iris,* July 8, 1848; *El Siglo XIX,* July, 1848. Articles appeared almost daily reporting conditions in Yucatán.

[23] Letter from residents of Campeche to President Herrera, June 8, 1848, quoted in Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 179–180.

Yucatán also figured in diplomatic relations with the British. It was charged by the Yucatán officials that the Indians were receiving secret aid from British sympathizers and adventurers in Belize. The *jefe político* of Sotuta claimed that during the last months of 1848, the British had sent a large supply of powder and 2,000 rifles to the Indians who held Bacalar at the time. This interventionist action was protested by the Herrera government as a "perfidious act which prolonged the war." The British diplomatic representative in Mexico promised to bring the matter to the attention of His Majesty's government, but nothing was done in the meantime to insure strict neutrality.[26] When the illicit traffic in war supplies continued, President Herrera again protested and met with the usual dilatory tactics.[27] In November, 1849, the British superintendent of Belize, Fancourt, offered to mediate between the Indians and the Yucatán authorities. The Indians demanded that they be given an independent status and that the land east of a line drawn from Bacalar northward to the Gulf be set aside for them exclusively.[28] The Mexican government finally authorized the governor of Yucatán, Barbachano, to enter into negotiations with the Indians through the British governor, but on the basis that the Indians not be granted independence although their lands—formerly seized—were to be restored to them.[29] A truce was declared while these efforts at conciliation were under way.

---

[24] Saban was located to the south of Ichmul; and Chikinconot, the sister cantonment, lay just to the north. The siege of Tihosuco began in January, 1849. *El Globo,* March 1, 1849; Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 580–581.

[25] "Discurso del general José Joaquín de Herrera, al abrir las sesiones ordinarias, en 1 de enero de 1850," from *Informes y manifiestos,* I, 369.

[26] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* 253.

[27] Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 582; *Memorias del ministro de relaciones,* 1850, pp. 8–9.

News of the proposed British mediation filtered into Washington and attracted alarmed attention. Since the British speculators had obtained lands from the Indians in Yucatán in the past, offers of British mediation were viewed with suspicion by the United States. The American *chargé d'affaires* in Mexico, Robert M. Walsh, reported on the situation as follows:

> How far the step may be prompted by mere philanthropy it is, of course, impossible to say. Certain it is, however, that people here are not disposed to give England the credit of disinterestedness, but seem determined to believe that, wherever she places her foot her object is to take up her abode.[30]

In October, British mediation was accepted with some misgiving, but all concerned were growing weary of the bloody struggle and were desirous of peace.

The Yucatán government, however, was not disposed to accept the territorial division as proposed by the Indian leaders. It felt that, by so doing, it compromised its position and that such action would be tantamount to recognizing the contention of the Indian leaders, namely, that the local government had never actually had jurisdiction over the natives. The Yucatán authorities did avail themselves of the apparent disposition for peace to send priests among the Indians who urged them to submit to state authority as law-abiding citizens. This policy of the government, combined with occasional displays of force, was termed *palma y espada.* In some regions, the persuasive pleadings of the *padres* won adherents to the plan of peaceful reconciliation. A number of *caciques* were willing to make peace, but a larger number refused to acquiesce on the ground that during this period of proposed truce the whites had continued their raiding expeditions which the Indians understood were to cease. It appears that the leaders of the white troops had taken advantage of the division and confusion of the enemy to strengthen their positions and to secure much-needed supplies. This unwarranted action greatly jeopardized the pending peace negotiations.[31]

---

[28] This arrangement would have excluded the whites from this area entirely. Fancourt could not entertain their proposal that they be governed from Belize. He prevailed on the delegates to reduce their territorial demands and to allow the whites to reside among them. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 585.

[29] Letter of Robert M. Walsh, U. S. *chargé d'affaires ad interim* at Mexico City, to John M. Clayton, Secretary of State, October 13, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 346.

[30] *Ibid.*

The Indian leaders met at Cruzchen on January 24, 1850, and drew up a rather lengthy and ambitious proposal as a basis for peace. It was signed by Chan, Pec, Novelo, and Secretary M. A. Gil and was put in the hands of the Yucatán officials by a commission composed of clergymen from Valladolid.[32] Some of the oustanding items in this proposal were:

> (1) that the Indians retain their arms, (2) that there be a segregation of whites and Indians and that certain lands be set aside for the natives, (3) that priests would be gladly received by the Indians, (4) Spanish merchants would be allowed to sell their wares in Indian towns and villages unmolested, (5) at the conclusion of peace, all Indian and Mexican or Yucatec prisoners were to be released and to be free to return to their own people, and (6) all persons taking part in the rebellion against the Yucatán and Mexican governments should receive full and complete amnesty.[33]

It was requested in the petition that the period of time required for consideration of the proposal be regarded as a period of truce and that the raids of the whites be restrained. Continued conflict obviously would not promote conditions conducive to a final agreement on terms, and the Indian leaders did not want to be held responsible for any new outbreaks. As a further expression of good will the petitioners added:

> If it be possible may God grant that the war cease and that the ill-feeling between us disappear, that we may often come to visit your excellency [the Governor of Yucatán] and that the towns and villages [destroyed during the war] be reëstablished. We understand that baptism costs no more than three *reales* and marriage 10 *reales* and we can also pay for masses. These things please our people greatly and we have the highest respect for your religion. . . . All that we ask is that all attacks cease until you have replied to our petition or peace has been accomplished.[34]

---

[31] One white raiding expedition under Méndez made a sally in the direction of Chan's headquarters at Cruzchen and took 150 loads of maize and 160 prisoners. *La Patria*, February 25, 1850.

[32] This rambling proposal was rather indefinite as to whether the Indians would or would not hold an independent status. The original was written in Mayan and was translated into Spanish by the priests. In being translated again from Spanish into English, much of the original meaning, of course, is lost.

[33] The thirteen articles of this project are given in Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 358–362.

[34] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 363–364. Unfortunately, peace was not yet to be realized. With the violation of the hoped-for truce by the whites, the Indians renewed their attacks.

All efforts at settlement, however, failed because of an inability to arrive at an agreement on terms and the fact that both sides were constantly violating the truce. In February, 1850, President Herrera's Secretary of War, Mariano Arista, delegated General Micheltorena, who had been stationed in California during the recent war with the United States, as supreme commander of the Yucatán campaign. General Micheltorena continued to use the policy of *palma y espada, and* "priestly peace commissioners" accompanied or preceded the armed forces. Although Micheltorena met with some success, he soon became dissatisfied with his appointment. Lack of adequate supplies, equipment, money and men caused him to resign only a few months after his arrival. He made the statement before resigning that he could "subdue the rebels within four months if a million pesos were placed at his disposal."[35] He was replaced in May, 1851, during the presidency of Arista by General Vega, who gradually restored the peninsula to white control.

In early March, 1850, a fire swept the town of Carmen which had been the chief refuge of the white *émigrés.*

> But soon a terrible thing happened. Most of the town of Carmen was destroyed by fire. The loss was estimated at $3,000,000. It was thought that the fire was intentional, and it probably was, for a few hours later posters announced that another fire would soon occur. On March 18, another fire was set as promised, adding to the fear and desolation.[36]

The Mexican capital itself was not spared from the subversive activity of these Indian agents. A few days following the second fire at Carmen a similar incident occurred in Mexico City. President Herrera and several of his cabinet ministers had just come from the cathedral where they had been attending Holy Communion service. At one o'clock the bells of several churches in different sections of the city suddenly rang out. Four huge pillars of smoke were seen to rise in as many sections of the capital. The event was all the more terrifying as one of the members of the Chamber of Deputies, Juan de Dios Cañedo, had been found murdered that very morning.[37] The populace began to feel that they were surrounded by murderers and arsonists. The fires, at least, were the direct result or reprisals for the aid the federal government had been rendering Yucatán against the Indians, and the operatives of the Indian leaders in the capital took direct action as a means of expressing Indian resentment at federal interference. The opposition press took this occasion to charge Herrera with inability to protect the lives and property of the people and to allege that his Minister of War, Arista, had been responsible for the "political assassination" of Cañedo.

---

[35] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 586. This was obviously out of the question, a loan of $70,000 alone being offered by the peninsular people.

[36] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 372; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 584 footnote.

[37] The fire was eventually brought under control although at one time it threatened to envelop the whole city. "The people were terrified and ran around aimlessly." The fire was reported to have originated in a carriage shop in Sapo Street, but by nightfall the flames had been extinguished. Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 374–375.

In addition to diplomatic questions posed by the Yucatán race war with Spain, Britain, and the United States, the Mexican government had two other major problems of an internal nature to settle with the Yucatán authorities. These involved the state's payment of federal taxes and the practice of selling captured Indians into virtual slavery to Cuban plantation owners. After Yucatán had elected to return voluntarily to the federal union, the Herrera administration assigned her a payment of 16,000 pesos a month as her proportionate share of the federal tax burden. Not only was this money needed for the national reorganization program, but President Herrera also knew that this act of payment would constitute recognition by the state of her federal relationship and would serve to reaffirm Yucatán's duties and responsibilities to the federal government. The local officials, however, reduced the amount assessed to 15,000 pesos on their own accord, and when a federal agent was sent to collect it, such a furor was raised that the amount was further reduced to an almost negligible sum.[38] The return of Yucatán to the national fold was, therefore, a financial liability to the Herrera administration although its reincorporation into the union was hailed as a political accomplishment.[39]

The other problem brought up the question of slavery which had been nominally outlawed in Mexico. Since the Yucatán government had practically no facilities for housing the captured natives nor food enough to feed the white population and the army, much less the Indians, Governor Barbachano secured the passage of a decree on November 6, 1848, as the solution to his problem.[40] This decree provided for the expulsion of all persons captured who had taken part in the rebellion against the government for a period of ten years. The motive was twofold: to lessen the overwhelming preponderance of Indian inhabitants and also to free the government of the burden of their support during the war. Certain plantation owners in Cuba made an offer of twenty-five pesos to the Yucatán government for each prisoner surrendered to them for service. This program gave the Indians a status similar to that of indentured servants. Governor Barbachano thought this to be an admirable solution since the scheme disposed of the Indians and at the same time brought in additional revenue for the prosecution of the war. The Yucatán government, therefore, accepted the proposal of the Cubans and made a feeble gesture toward protecting the Indians to a certain extent in the form of contracts which stated their term of service, pay, and treatment.[41]

---

[38] The Mexican government asked for "un situado de diez y seis mil pesos." *Memorias del ministro de guerra,* 1850, p. 12. In protest against the collection of duties by the federal agent, the *jefe político* at Tiximin pronounced for separation, but the attempt was promptly suppressed. *Memorias de guerra,* 1850, p. 9.

[39] Ancona, *Historia de Yucatán,* IV, 202–212 (The author gives the federal government little credit for its part in driving back the Indians and restorin partial peace); Riva Palacio, *op. cit.,* IV, 714 (Governor Barbachano declares Yucatán's return to the federal union, August 17, 1848).

[40] Ancona, *op. cit.,* IV, 178–212.

The first group sent to Cuba under these arrangements numbered three hundred. The Mexican Consul at Havana inquired into the case and reported the unusual proceedings to his government. In April, 1849, President Herrera issued a decree against such exportations. The matter was also called to the attention of the Yucatán authorities by Herrera. They, in turn, based their defense of the system on humanitarian grounds, saying that it was undoubtedly preferable for the Indians to live in servitude than to starve in Yucatán or to be put to death when captured as rebels and traitors. It was also claimed that the fee of twenty-five pesos was only a slight recompense for the damage and desolation caused by the captives. Local Yucatán newspapers, as *El Fénix* of Campeche, charged that the local government was forced to resort to extremes because of the "indifference" of the Mexican government to her fate.[42]

When President Herrera rebuked Governor Barbachano for the barbaric practice of selling the Indians into slavery, Barbachano replied:

> If these cruel men [Indians] had been judged for their acts, they would doubtless have been condemned to death. Is it not better to allow them to earn a living outside of the land they have troubled so much, than to die on the gallows? When I saw earlier in the year what a large number of

---

[41] The term was for 10 years, with a compensation to the men of two pesos a month, 2 cotton suits a year, and certain weekly allowances of maize and meat. The women and children received much less. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 584, footnote.

[42] On June 15, 1849, *El Fénix* reported "the Yucatán government finds itself unable to feed its soldiers, who are loudly demanding food. The problems which perplex our government [Yucatán's] and the plight of our soldiers are indescribable." The article continued that since the Mexican government under Herrera could not give more adequate aid, the state government had been forced to pass extraordinary measures for raising revenue without securing the approval of the National government. Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 277.

Indians had been captured bearing arms against the state, I hesitated to take them before a military tribunal in view of the obvious tragic end that awaited them.[43]

Governor Barbachano argued that the voluntary remission of twenty-five pesos for each Indian "voluntarily" signing a contract for labor in Cuba could not be termed the "price of slavery." In a humane effort to prevent the white soldiers from taking vengeance on the Indian captives, he explained that five pesos were offered to the soldiers for each prisoner taken alive. He said that "sad experience has convinced us that the Indian population must be reduced at least one-fourth or one-third to give peace and security to the whites."[44] Barbachano concluded by saying that if the Mexican government still objected, the plan would be discontinued. However, if this were done, he urged President Herrera to send money to feed and house the prisoners and also troops to carry on the war. President Herrera ordered that the emigration of Indians to Cuba cease and promised increasing aid to Yucatán. Although Barbachano pledged the cessation of this practice, the slave traffic did not completely come to an end nor was the federal government able to enforce its demand or to fulfill satisfactorily its promise of adequate assistance.

During 1849 and 1850, the cause of the whites was materially aided by the assassination of two of the Indian leaders. Chí's own secretary, who had fallen in love with his wife, murdered the leader of the Indian revolutionists in the central region.[45] Antonio Pat brought about his own undoing by proposing a tax for the purpose of obtaining needed war supplies. Apparently, it did not seem logical to the Indians to be waging a war against taxation on the one hand only to be taxed by another source, even though it might be necessary to victory. Rival leaders consequently had little difficulty in turning the Indians against Pat. The opposition against him became so general that he had to flee for his life. Soon thereafter, he was overtaken, captured, and executed.[46] This loss of leadership greatly weakened the Indian efforts. By the close of President Herrera's term of office, he was able to make the following statement concerning conditions in Yucatán in his final speech to Congress:

---

[43] Quoted by Zamacois in his *op. cit.*, XIII, 279 from Barbachano's letter of March 26, 1849, from Mérida to the Mexican government.

[44] *Ibid.*, 277–281. It was estimated that the full-blooded Indian population comprised three-fifths of the whole and the Indians, plus their supporters, outnumbered the whites two to one.

[45] Ancona, *op. cit.*, IV, 252–255; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 585.

[46] *La Patria*, September–October, 1849; Ancona, *op. cit.*, IV, 252–255.

> . . . as a result of the aid that the Mexican government has supplied, the Indians have been confined to the most southern part of the state, reducing them to defensive warfare only, so that today in the principal populated areas the inhabitants can live with tranquillity. Nevertheless, the complete pacification of the area cannot be claimed. . . . I can do no less than to recommend emphatically to the legislative body that it fix its attentión strongly on what takes place in this remote part of our territory and make every effort possible to suffocate an evil which might grow rapidly and endanger the whole Republic.[47]

The bitter struggle in Yucatán encouraged similar and sympathetic uprisings among the Indians of the Sierra Gorda, along the northern frontier and, to a lesser degree, in Chiapas. These widely-scattered disturbances necessitated a dispersion of troops and a large expenditure of money both of which were a deadly drain on the government's ability to sustain itself and on an already bankrupt treasury. These troops were desperately needed to quell the revolution of Paredes and Jarauta against the Herrera administration and to provide police protection to the people from bandits and highwaymen. The money might better have been used for internal improvements, the payment of interest and principal on the public debt, and delinquent salaries, but one thing hinged on another and made for an almost impossible situation. This vicious cycle of overlapping problems made it difficult to know where to begin and which question deserved first consideration. While attention was diverted in one direction, other needs became so pressing that something had to be done to alleviate the pressure from these sources, thereby preventing a complete and satisfactory solution to the problem first under consideration.

The revolt of the Indians in the Sierra Gorda under Quiros never gained the intensity of its counterpart in the peninsula. As soon as he took office, President Herrera sent General J. L. Uraga and General Angel Guzmán as commanders of the government forces to subdue the insurrectionists of the Sierra Gorda. In addition to the regular troops, Herrera called on the governors of the adjoining states for local militia. The governors gave speedy support fearing that the evil might spread to their own domains. Several thousand state militiamen were dispatched to the aid of the federal government's forces. Local militia and regulars operated in close coöperation and by the end of 1848 it appeared that the Quiros rebellion was all but dead. President Herrera, who had advocated a strong citizen militia, was greatly gratified by the harmonious and effective working relationship between that body and the regular soldiery.[48]

---

[47] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín de Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso,* 8.

In early 1849, the campaign in the Sierra Gorda, which had been going so well, took a turn for the worse. One of the officers attached to the staff of General Guzmán decided that the time was ripe "to pronounce" in favor of the recall of Santa Anna to the presidency. This officer was Leonardo Márquez, who up to that time had conducted himself with distinction against the Indians.[49] Márquez was a conservative and a strong believer in the merits of the master politician, Santa Anna. His pronouncement was poorly timed, however, and the majority of the people who longed for peace and prosperity turned a deaf ear to his pleadings. Although his attempt was unsuccessful, the aborigine mountaineers took immediate advantage of the division in the ranks of the enemy to capture the town of Río Verde and several villages of lesser importance. Negotiations which had been entered into by the Indian leaders and the government authorities were discontinued by the natives. Efforts at conciliation, however, had already resulted in a convention between the opposing parties which Quiros now chose to ignore in the hope of obtaining more ambitious concessions from the harassed Herrera government. The President answered this new threat by requesting more militia from the neighboring states. Response was instantaneous, and two thousand fresh troops were contributed.[50]

The political disaffection of Márquez was little more than an annoyance, but it did give the Sierra Gorda rebels a new lease on life and served to prolong operations in this area for several months. In late September, 1849, while the capital was celebrating the anniversary of the entrance of General Herrera's liberating army into Mexico City in 1821, news came that the backbone of the revolt in the Sierra Gorda had been broken. Quiros was captured by troops under the command of Tomás Mejía, a local commander. Quiros' aide, Juan Ramírez, had already been mortally wounded in the siege of Las Tetillas.[51] When these *caciques* were lost, the revolt collapsed. Quiros was later brought to trial before a military tribunal. Minister of War Arista ordered General Bustamante "to judge the leader of the revolt in conformity with the law, in order that he may receive the punishment he deserves."[52] The Indian leader was sentenced to be shot and was subsequently executed. The Sierra was then quiet. Steps were taken to prevent a possible recurrence of the racial uprising by the resettlement of several hundred of Quiros' most active followers in different northern frontier colonies.[53] Here they might exercise their turbulent spirits by repelling the Indians from the United States' side of the border or aid in thwarting the ambitious schemes of some in these provinces who had plans of setting up an independent northern republic. At least, this is what the central government hoped would be accomplished by moving them to the frontier. Military colonies were also established in the Sierra Gorda as an additional safeguard to preserve peace. In summing up the success of the government's policy in the Sierra Gorda, President Herrera said:

---

[48] In a speech to Congress on January 1, 1851, Herrera stated: ". . . in the wars with the Indians of the Sierra Gorda the troops of the militia have joined with the permanent forces, on an equal footing with them, and their valor and discipline were second to none, evidencing fine coöperation between civilan troops and the army. The faithfulness of the militia has been completely proved." *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 12–13.

[49] General Bustamante had praised him highly, saying "at nine a.m. on February 6, the government forces met those of the rebels in the town of Tapona. Márquez was sent with Guzmán's brigade to attack the point of Gabia. Márquez attacked with admirable decision, as did the other forces, and the hill was taken in forty minutes." Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 265.

[50] Toward the end of March in the Sierra Gorda, the government asked the states of Mexico, Michoacán, Querétaro, Guanajuato, San Luis, Jalisco, and Tamaulipas to provide 2,000 men to aid in putting down the Indians under General Rómulo de la Vega. It also ordered 700 veterans from Tampico and Monterrey to march to the relief of Río Verde. Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 275; Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, II, 368, *Memoria del ministro de guerra*, 1850, p. 7.

> . . . not only were they [the rebels] made to feel the power of constituted authority but were at the same time made participants in the benefits of civilization. . . . The victory which God has given to our forces was in itself glorious and beneficial in its results, of equal value to conquered and conquerors alike.[54]

In Chiapas, a small opposition faction used the opportunity afforded by the weakened condition of the nation following the war to rebel against the local authorities. The governor of the state, Maldonado, was a loyal adherent of President Herrera and the federalist régime. The Indian leader was one Beltrán who aspired to political control as well as the improvement of the lot of the Indians. During 1848, Beltrán held the ascendancy in Chiapas and was assisted in his plans by a Spaniard named Olave. He even succeeded in capturing Maldonado, whom he held captive for a short time. After suffering several defeats at the hands of the Indians, Maldonado received federal aid and troops from Guatemala and nearby Tabasco. In early 1850, Beltrán was captured, convicted of treason, and executed.[55] The states of Guerrero and Puebla were also briefly troubled by a native leader called Juan Clara, who gave new stimulus to the lingering mountaineer revolt which had had its origin several years before at Chilapa. Clara was finally forced to submit to government authority in May, 1851.[56]

---

[51] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 300; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 578.

[52] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 300–301.

[53] *Legislación mejicana*, 1849, pp. 82, 292–293.

[54] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 9.

The subjugation of the Indians in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec was brought about largely through fear that filibustering expeditions from the United States might land in that area. President Herrera was favorable to American proposals to acquire the right to build a canal or railroad across Tehuantepec to establish interoceanic communication. A preliminary convention was entered into in June, 1850, to accomplish this beneficial project.[57] When it was generally known that one of the clauses permitted the United States to send troops to guard the construction of the transit route, a cry of alarm was raised in many quarters, even by persons friendly to President Herrera. This led eventually to the rejection of the convention and the annulment of the original concession for such a project made to José Garay in 1842, whose rights had now passed to American claimants.

In the meantime, American grantees were incensed at the long delay and the probability of eventual annulment of the privileges obtained. They appealed to high officials in Washington and raised a terrific clamor in the press in support of their claims. The least expected was a large indemnity from the Mexican government as recompense for their losses. Many of the statements made by the grantees were of a distinctly imperialistic flavor and implied the threat of force. The result in Mexico was the movement of Mexican troops to the isthmus to repel any possible attempts of the Tehuantepec Company or of filibustering expeditions to enforce these demands. While these precautions proved needless for the purpose anticipated, they had the indirect but happy result of preventing a continuation of local revolutionary activity on the part of the Indians and others. The regional Indian leaders were forced to abandon their plans with the arrival of large numbers of government troops in the isthmus and surrounding areas.[58]

---

[55] *El Universal,* November 25, 1849, and December 12, 1849; June 25, 1850; Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 52, 135.

[56] *Memorias de guerra,* 1851, pp. 5, 10. The murder of General Rea at Ayutla during October, 1850, ascribed partly to his Spanish origin, aroused great excitement. *El Monitor Republicano,* January 4, 1851; Rivera Cambas, *op. cit.,* IV, 210; Arrangoiz, *op. cit.,* II, 313.

[57] *Legislación mejicana,* 1850, pp. 152–157. The convention was signed by Minister Pedraza and Robert Letcher in June, 1850. Negotiations and final exchange of ratifications were long and drawn out. The project was finally rejected by an act of the Mexican Congress in April, 1852.

Another measure that served to strengthen governmental control in the Mescala region was the constitution of the new state of Guerrero in the Southwest. Although its importance was primarily political, it was also a force in the maintenance of peace and order. The new state was named in honor of Vicente Guerrero, the great patriot of the Wars for Independence.[59] It was made up of districts formerly belonging to the states of Mexico, Puebla, and Michoacán. President Herrera, Nicolás Bravo, and Juan Álvarez were chiefly instrumental in the creation of the new state.[60] The local authority was now better able to deal with Indian revolts and rebel activity in that area.

Along the northern frontier, conditions between Indians and whites were somewhat comparable to those in Yucatán. This racial warfare, however, was more or less intermittent and not of the sustained nature of the revolt in the peninsula. Although the situation was at times desperate for the whites, the conflict did not assume the intensity of the fighting in Yucatán, and the arena covered a much larger area. Not only were the settlers along Mexico's northern periphery widely scattered, but they were hopelessly few in number. Small outlying settlements and lonely *haciendas* were subjected to raids by unfriendly Indians from both sides of the Rio Grande. Many were the incidents of individual and wholesale massacres, burning of buildings and crops, and the stealing or stampeding of cattle. The newspapers of the northern provinces were replete with daily announcements of new barbarities and atrocities. Appeals to the federal powers in the capital for aid had been largely futile. This was true, however, through no lack of desire on the part of the Herrera régime to supply that aid. What could be done, under the trying circumstances under which President Herrera was forced to operate, was done. Supplies and men were sent when they could be spared, but these were always short of adequacy.

The Mexican provinces along the Rio Grande had suffered most during the North American invasion. These people, for the most part, had been opposed to the war, realizing the great damage that they would suffer. Succeeding events were comparable to their fears, and the army of invasion ruled the northern provinces by martial law for over a year. When the American troops were withdrawn, however, the frontier was laid open to savage attacks by marauding Indians, and promises of aid from the Mexican capital—which could not be kept—only added to the general feeling of dissatisfaction and discontent. On several occasions during the war, the suggestion had been made that the seven northern provinces of Mexico should separate from the federation and set up an independent republic.[61] These plans found new proponents and sympathizers after the war. A separate republic, it was said, would serve to offer greater protection to the people of the frontier, by providing closer coöperation of the states concerned and by setting up a center of government much nearer the theater of frontier warfare.[62]

---

[58] For details see W. R. Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, under indexed topics: Tehuantepec Isthmus, Benjamin, Garay, Hargous, Manning and Mackintosh, and New Orleans Tehuantepec Company. Refer also this volume, chapter entitled "Diplomatic Relations."

[59] *Legislación mejicana*, 1849, pp. 99–100; Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 151.

[60] Appeals to the other states concerned for confirmation in *El Universal*, June 30, 1849. For legislative action in regard thereto, see Dublán and Lozano, *Legislación mexicana*, V, 559–560; 623–624; 647–648.

Feeling that the federal government was indifferent to their sufferings, the northern states decided to take matters of defense and offense against the Indians into their own hands. Nothing concrete was ever actually done in regard to establishing a free and independent Sierra Madre Republic, but coöperative efforts were made by local governing authorities to aid each other in time of need against the common enemy.

Local troops had great difficulty in dealing effectively with the savages who were generally well mounted and better equipped than the Mexicans, being supplied with superior weapons by unscrupulous traders from both sides of the boundary. The local authorities had frequently petitioned the national government to reëstablish forts, set up military colonies, and send missionaries. President Herrera tried to do all of these on as large a scale as financial and politico-military circumstances would allow. After the suppression of the Quiros uprising in the Sierra Gorda, many of his supporters were transplanted by the Herrera government to the northern frontier to aid in holding back the Indian hordes pressing against the white settlements. Some military colonies were set up and pushed forward, even as in colonial days when the *presidio* and the mission were the instruments of bringing civilization to the barbarians. In an effort to be ever on the alert, bands of "minute men," flying corps, or mobile guard, were formed and the number of mounted troops thereby increased. Even so, the area to be protected was too great. The pillaging raids continued and increased, and the hatred of Indian and white was intensified. The frontiersmen then decided to match savagery with savagery and to pay atrocity with atrocity.

---

[61] *Justin H. Smith Papers*, Vol. 20, pp. 69–120. In this volume are found a series of nineteen letters covering the years 1846–1848, relating to various proposals to establish an independent Republic of the Sierra Madre. Although seriously considered then and later, nothing concrete was ever done to establish this union.

[62] The commandant at Matamoros reported in June, 1849, that a conspiracy had been discovered, emanating from refugees at Brownsville, Texas, and proposing to set up a Republic of the Rio Grande (or Sierra Madre Republic). In a constitution drawn up which was quite similar to that of the United States, it was declared that the seven northern provinces were to be independent of Mexico, on the ground of corrupt administration and political changes, oppressive exactions by usurping rulers and their disorderly armies, forcible encroachments on the church and faith and on personal property and rights, and disregard for the interests and sufferings of the northern states. The nine articles may be consulted among other places in *El Universal*, July 10, 1849.

When the Mexican government was protesting the sale of Indians into Cuban "slavery" in Yucatán, the legislature of the state of Chihuahua, far to the north, was making similar contracts with adventurers from the United States who were willing to do anything for a price. The program in some respects brought to mind French and Indian War days when the "hair-buying" General Hamilton was pursuing his bloody work in the Northwest Territory. These contracts were appropriately called "blood contracts," since they provided for the hiring of outlaw bands to kill Indians at so much a head. There was a very complete and graduated scale of prices for living and dead Indians which also took into account age and sex.

One of the adventurers for hire was M. H. Cherallie, formerly an officer in the United States army during the Mexican War. He made the following interesting proposals to the Chihuahua government:

> (1) For every Indian proved to have been killed, you will pay me 200 *duros* and for every prisoner over 14 years old, 250 *duros;* for each Indian dead or alive under 14, 150 *duros.* (2) I am to have all the plunder taken from the Indians such as arms, cattle, etc. (3) All captives will be delivered to you. (4) The undersigned promises to restrain his men from doing any damage to private property and will pay for what he needs for his expeditions obtained from nearby *haciendas.*[63]

---

[63] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 284–285. These contracts were severely criticized in many newspapers. *La República* for July 4, 1849, in an article entitled "Blood Contracts" stated that the barbarous society which permitted such uncivilized bargaining was no better than the savages themselves. Zamacois defends the action of Chihuahua at great length. He states that Herrera "desired to establish forces there but could not" in spite of pleadings to do so. As a result, many "haciendas were pillaged and others were threatened." The decree, providing for the killing of Indians for a price, was approved

These proposals were approved by the legislature of Chihuahua and were written into law. Similar action was taken by her neighbors, chiefly in Durango where it was felt that fighting fire with fire was the only practical solution to the Indian menace. It was claimed that the desperate situation called for uncompromising action and extreme remedy. To the majority of people along the frontier, these ruthless measures were understandable and pardonable. In many of the southern states and in the Mexican capital, the "blood contracts" were heralded as marking the nadir of Mexican civilization. Journals of the states

> not so afflicted naturally raised a loud cry against the contracts, alleging among other reasons that it left the door open for numerous abuses, such as robbery, spoliation, and attacks on friendly Indian villages.[64]

The argument in reply was that no other effective means existed, and that this form of retaliation, publicly announced, was no worse than the methods of the foe,

> who lay constantly on the watch for stealthy descents on exposed settlements, leaving smoking ruins and bereaved families to mark their visits.[65]

Another expedient was proposed by San Luis Posotí. This plan suggested that the harassed states draw together in a coalition for joint action against the marauders. Each state was to contribute to a common fund for prosecuting the campaign, and a certain allotment of troops would be assessed each province. The acts of the federal government to assist the states in solving this Indian problem are discussed elsewhere under military colonization.

---

by the legislature, but this "was motivated not by cruelty but by the feeling that it was the only way to deal with the Indians." Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 579–580.

[64] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 579.

[65] *Ibid.*, 580.

CHAPTER X

Diplomatic Relations

The treaty of peace with the United States had been signed at Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848. Ratifications were finally exchanged in May, slight modifications having been made in the original document by the United States Senate. President Herrera, who had futilely tried to preserve the peace during his first administration, now exerted his best efforts to obtain national acceptance and support of the treaty's provisions. He understood that the most important phase of Mexico's foreign relations would be with the United States, since those two nations endeavored to restore friendly relations by a mutually strict adherence to the terms of peace. Realizing that there was deep resentment toward the treaty in Congress, although it had been formally accepted in May, President Herrera assured the legislative body then in Querétaro that he did not "believe it possible that Mexico could have obtained conditions more favorable."[1] He also stated that the foreign policy of his administration would be "to maintain and cultivate friendship and understanding with the United States and all other nations and to respect and carry out all treaty commitments."[2] On the very day that Herrera took over the duties of the presidency, he appointed the *moderado,* Mariano Otero, to the crucial post of Minister of Internal and Foreign Relations.[3]

As further evidence of President Herrera's good will, he sent a letter of greeting to President Polk on June 6, informing him of his election as constitutional president on the third of the month. Herrera added:

> I sincerely assure you that during my administration my efforts will be bent toward securing the happiness of my people and toward consolidating and strengthening the friendly bonds which happily exist between Mexico and the United States of America.[4]

---

[1] "El General José Joaquín de Herrera, al jurar como proprietario en 2 de junio de 1848," from *Informes y manifiestos,* I, 352. Part of this speech is quoted in a letter of Luis de la Rosa, Mexican Minister to the United States, to James Buchanan, Secretary of State, February 24, 1849, given in Manning, *op. cit.,* IX, 314.

[2] "El General José Joaquín de Herrera, al jurar como proprietario en 2 de junio de 1848," from *Informes y manifiestos,* I, 352–353.

[3] *Leyes y decretos mejicanos,* Doc. 56, p. 159. Decree of June 3, 1848.

[4] *Notes from the Mexican Government,* 1848–1849, Vol. 7, Minister of Foreign Relations, State Department Archives, Library of Congress. The letter is

Herrera then appointed Luis de la Rosa as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States in July. De la Rosa proved to be a wise choice and remained in Washington throughout Herrera's administration, working assiduously for the improvement of relations between the two nations.[5] In presenting his credentials to President Polk, de la Rosa was highly recommended by President Herrera in a letter addressed to "His Excellency, the President of the United States of America."

> Great and Good Friend.
>
> Friendly relations fortunately having been restored between Mexico and the United States of America, my Government is animated by the most sincere desire to preserve, maintain and strengthen them more and more for the common welfare of both countries, and judging that the permanent residence of a Mexican Minister near the American Government will contribute greatly to so important an object, I have nominated, with the approval of the Senate, Senator Luis de la Rosa, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Mexico to the United States of America, and I confidently hope that this gentleman will efficaciously seek to maintain and augment the relation of friendship which happily exists between the two Republics.
>
> Having entire confidence in the said Don Luis de la Rosa, I hope your Excellency will accord him full faith and credit in whatever he may assure your Excellency on behalf of the Government and People of the Mexican Republic, and above all when he refers to our sincere good wishes for the prosperity and welfare of the United States.
>
> And beseeching God to hold Your Excellency in his holy and worthy keeping, I offer you the high consideration with which I am,
>
> Your Excellency's Good Friend
> José J. de Herrera
>
> Mariano Otero[6]

Foreign Minister Otero also wrote commending the new envoy to Secretary of State Buchanan:

> His public career, his intelligence and patriotism, and the part which he took in the happy restoration of peace between the two nations, induce the Mexican Government to hope that the said Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary may succeed in acquiring the good will of the Government of the United States.[7]

---

signed by José Joaquín de Herrera and Mariano Otero, in the National Palace of Santiago de Querétaro, June 6, 1848, in the twenty-seventh year of independence. The closing reads: "I am your good friend,—Herrera."

[5] Due to various delays, de la Rosa did not arrive in the United States until December 2, 1848. He remained there until January 10, 1852. Letter of Luis de la Rosa, Mexican Minister to the United States to James Buchanan, January 4, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 303 footnote.

[6] Letter dated September 13, 1848, from *Mexico, Notes to the Mexican Legation*, Luis de la Rosa, September 29, 1848, to June 25, 1851, Vol. 5, State Department Archives.

[7] Letter of Mariano Otero to James Buchanan, September 14, 1848, *ibid.*

President Polk, on August 7, 1848, selected Nathan Clifford, who had served as United States Commissioner to Mexico to complete the exchange of treaty ratifications, as the American Minister to Mexico. Secretary Buchanan apprised Clifford of his appointment and outlined the policy of his government which Clifford was expected to pursue as follows:

> There has been, as you are aware, no period in the history of our relations with Mexico when it was more important than at the present moment to have our country ably represented at the capital of that Republic. The irritation of feeling arising out of the late and to the Mexicans disastrous war, ought to be soothed; the machinations of foreign governments injurious to the United States ought to be counteracted, and the Mexican Government ought to be persuaded to abandon their absurd and unreasonable tariff. These are important objects of your mission, requiring your personal attention. If you can succeed in accomplishing them, you will acquire and deserve the gratitude of your country.[8]

This was obviously a difficult assignment; but Clifford, by virtue of his pleasing personality, understanding, and persuasive reasonableness, was able to discharge his duties with success during the short period of his ministership.[9]

By the nature of circumstances, the most important phases of Mexican foreign relations were with the United States. Most of these problems were directly or indirectly related to the interpretation or fulfillment of the provisions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Outstanding among these problems were: agreement on the status of the interpretative Protocol of Querétaro, efforts of the United States to acquire transit rights across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the survey of the new boundary, various border conflicts involving nationals and Indian depredations across the Rio Grande, filibustering expeditions, and numerous cases involving citizens of both nations in which their rights were allegedly violated. It may be said to the credit of both republics that the greatest restraint and coöperation were shown throughout these negotiations. Although public sentiment on both sides of the border continued to reveal the unfortunate effects of the war, official relations during the Herrera administration were marked by an era of friendship and good neighborliness. The attitude of President Herrera, as revealed in his foreign correspondence, speeches to Congress, and his appointments to public office, played no small part in this successful policy.

---

[8] Letter of James Buchanan to Nathan Clifford, appointed United States Minister to Mexico, August 7, 1848, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 3.

[9] Even prior to his appointment as Minister, Clifford, as United States Commissioner, had reported: "It affords me sincere pleasure to assure the President that the present administration of this Republic and the class of opinion in the country under which it was formed and by which it is sustained, are manifestly disposed to cultivate the most friendly relations with the United States . . . ." Letter of Nathan Clifford to James Buchanan, Secretary of State, July 15, 1848, quoted in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, Vol. 6, p. 320.

The question of the Protocol of Querétaro involved a difference of opinion as to its legal status. Stated briefly, the problem was essentially this: United States commissioners arrived in Querétaro on May 25, 1848, for the purpose of exchanging ratifications of the treaty of peace. At that time they learned that the Mexican Senate had voted to approve the treaty. The Mexican commissioners, Luis G. Cuevas, Bernardo Couto, and the Foreign Minister, requested that Mr. Clifford, speaking for the United States delegation, explain the changes made in the treaty by the United States Senate. This he did. It was then suggested that these discussions and explanations be put in writing and publicly published in an effort to allay the bitter feeling against the treaty which existed in Querétaro and elsewhere. This also was done. The document was known as the Protocol of Querétaro, and it later was the contention of Mariano Otero and de la Rosa that the protocol should be considered as supplementary to the treaty with the same force and effect. In fact, Clifford had made the statement that although his government could not consider the protocol as a part of the treaty or as having any legal force, he personally regarded it as "a correct interpretation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo."[10]

Luis de la Rosa was instructed to say that his government had not completed ratifications of the treaty until President Herrera had signed his approval which came after and as a result of the issuance of the protocol. It was implied that he would not have signed the treaty had these explanations not been given.[11] When Zachary Taylor became President of the United States in early 1849, he not only claimed that the protocol had no legal standing but that the United States could not admit that it was "a correct interpretation of the treaty," as Clifford had stated. He added that the commissioners had been given no power to make such a protocol and that, for it to be binding, they would have had to be given authorization to make it and then it would have to have been approved by the president and Senate of the United States. For making the above conciliatory statement, Clifford was recalled on July 29, 1849, and Robert M. Walsh was appointed *chargé d'affaires*

---

[10] Letter of Nathan Clifford to Luis G. Cuevas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, April 30, 1849, quoted from Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 320. Cuevas had replaced Otero as Minister of Foreign Relations in November, 1848.

[11] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to James Buchanan, February 24, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 310–313.

ad interim until Robert P. Letcher arrived as the new minister.[12]

Letcher received his instructions on September 18, 1849, to the effect that since President Taylor felt that there were several discrepancies between the protocol and the treaty as amended by the Senate, wholly at variance with the original intent, he was to inform the Mexican government that the protocol could not be recognized in any respect.[13] This viewpoint finally prevailed after long and, in some respects, needless correspondence. Both sides had shifted ground in the course of debates. The Mexican contention had changed from insisting on the validity of the protocol as having equal force and effect as the treaty to claiming merely that these written explanations were a correct interpretation of the treaty.[14] The stand taken by the United States changed from an apparent willingness to recognize in the protocol a mutually agreeable explanation of the treaty, but with no legally binding character, to unwillingness to accept the protocol in any respect.[15] Both nations evidenced a lack of understanding of the constitutional processes of the other. The Mexicans did not seem to realize that whether the protocol was embodied in a new treaty, or considered as amendments or supplements to the original treaty, these would have to be approved by the American president and by the United States Senate in order to possess the quality of force desired. On the other hand, the officials of the United States did not seem to recognize that the signature of the Mexican president was essential to complete the ratification procedure. The whole affair could have been easily avoided had the delegates of both nations thought to make clear the status of the protocol among themselves before it was issued. Such, however, are the qualities which make us human.

---

[12] Letter of John M. Clayton, Secretary of State, to Nathan Clifford, July 29, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 28–29. Clifford remained as minister until September when Walsh took over his duties. Letcher was appointed Minister to Mexico on August 9, 1849, but did not arrive in Mexico until February 2, 1850.

[13] Letter of John M. Clayton to Robert P. Letcher, United States Minister to Mexico, September 18, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 31–35. The various articles and points of difference in interpretation are given in detail.

[14] For change in Mexican viewpoint see letters of Luis de la Rosa to James Buchanan, February 24, 1849, and José María de Lacunza, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, to Nathan Clifford, July 13, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 311 and 331.

[15] Letters of Nathan Clifford to Luis G. Cuevas, April 30, 1849, and of John M. Clayton to Luis de la Rosa, April 11, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 319 and 19 respectively. These differences on the part of the government of the United States may be attributed to a misunderstanding by Clifford as to his government's real attitude in this regard.

In spite of the intensity of feeling shown in the correspondence over the matter, the fundamental feeling of friendship continued. An excerpt from a letter from Robert M. Walsh to Secretary of State Buchanan reveals the attitude of President Herrera toward the former envoy, Nathan Clifford, and toward the United States.

> Mr. Clifford left this city for the United States on the 1st of the month, having presented me the day before to the Minister of Foreign Relations as Chargé d'Affaires. The adieux of Mr. Otero as well as of President Herrera, whom we subsequently visited, were accompanied with the kindest and most complimentary expressions, indicative of their grateful sense of the mode in which Mr. Clifford had acted in his official capacity and of their high appreciation of him as an individual. The President, especially, took occasion to reiterate in earnest phrase his desire for the most "sisterly" relations, between the two countries, and manifested the strongest conviction that in them is involved the welfare if not the existence of Mexico.[16]

The government of the United States showed its good will during the period of the protocol discussions by supporting the Herrera administration morally if not physically against the rebellious Paredes. Secretary Buchanan informed Nathan Clifford on August 7, as follows:

> The President and the people of the United States sincerely desire to maintain the most amicable relations with Mexico. They cordially wish that the present government may be able to sustain itself against its enemies, and they deprecate the success of Paredes . . . . The pacific and eminently patriotic character of President Herrera affords a sure pledge for the prosperity of Mexico, should he be able to retain his power, and all our feelings are enlisted in his favor.[17]

There was general rejoicing in Washington when President Herrera successfully put down the revolt of Paredes and Father Jarauta. The opinion was expressed that it was unfortunate that Paredes had not been captured and executed along with Jarauta. The American government was also disposed to aid Mexico against the Indians in Yucatán, but was unable to supply the three or four thousand troops requested because of the constitutional limitation that prevented the president from deploying troops in time of peace outside the continental limits of the United States.[18] When the Mexican government asked that the next two indemnity payments be made in advance to bolster the faltering economy, the United

---

[16] Letter of Robert M. Walsh to James Buchanan, November 30, 1848, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 302. Before leaving Mexico, Clifford tried to convince his government that Mexico accepted the United States' viewpoint on confirmation of land titles and freedom of religion in the ceded territory. Clifford to Clayton, September 6, 1849, Manning, *op. cit.*, 342.

[17] James Buchanan to Nathan Clifford, August 7, 1848, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 4–5.

[18] *Ibid.*, 4. For details, see chapter entitled "Racial Warfare."

States was unable to comply since a new treaty providing for such an arrangement would have been necessary.[19] However, an arrangement was made later for Mexico to obtain a loan of $800,000 with the next two instalments of the indemnity as security. The customs houses at Matamoros, Mazatlán, and Guaymas were returned to Mexican control after several months of delay. The loss in customs receipts during this period was made good to the Mexican treasury by the United States.[20]

In November, 1848, Otero resigned as Minister of Foreign Relations; and President Herrera offered the post to Luis G. Cuevas, who accepted it. Cuevas had been in Herrera's cabinet in the same post during his first administration, and his talents were well known and respected. Clifford wrote to Secretary Buchanan that

> the resignation of Mr. Otero, and the substitution of Mr. Cuevas, as Minister of Relations, does not weaken the Administration in the popular confidence and certainly adds something to the amount of talent and experience possessed by the Cabinet.[21]

Cuevas remained in office until May 10, 1849—only about six months. Herrera then desired to fill the foreign relations post with Peña y Peña but Congress would not approve the choice since he was serving as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court at the time. The President felt that the selection of Peña y Peña, who was highly respected in the United States for his efforts to consummate the peace, would greatly facilitate negotiations with that power. Failing in this, Herrera turned to José María Lacunza. He was acceptable to Congress, and his appointment was considered favorably by the United States.[22]

---

[19] Letter of Mariano Otero to Nathan Clifford, August 6, 1848, and Nathan Clifford to James Buchanan, August 8, 1848, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 298–299. In the latter letter, Clifford urged granting the Mexican request: "The state of their public finances renders some such arrangement not only highly desirable to them, but perhaps indispensable to enable them to carry on the Government."

[20] Letter of Mariano Otero to Nathan Clifford, September 25, 1848, found in *Notes from the Mexican Government*, Vol. 7, State Department Archives. Letter of Luis de la Rosa to James Buchanan, January 4, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 303–304. Also letter of January 19, 1849, *ibid.*, 304–306; Buchanan to de la Rosa, January 13, 1849, *ibid.*, 7. One of the reasons for delay was that Commodore Jones had not received proper authority to turn over the ports under his control.

[21] Letter of Nathan Clifford to James Buchanan, February 13, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 308. He also reported that there was some doubt as to whether Paredes had actually left Mexico.

[22] Letter of Nathan Clifford to John M. Clayton, May 14, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 322–324. Clifford attributes Cuevas' resignation to a misunderstanding Cuevas had with one of his fellow cabinet members. Clifford

The second major diplomatic problem facing the two republics concerned the desire of the United States to secure concessions to American grantees for transit rights across the Mexican Isthmus of Tehuantepec. Mexico had shown an earlier interest in this desirable project by granting concessions, in 1842, to José de Garay to construct a railroad, highway, or canal across the isthmus. However, Garay had not begun construction within the time stipulated—owing largely to the revolutionary conditions in Mexico at that time. Although there was some doubt as to whether the grant still retained its validity, Santa Anna allowed the original holder of the grant to transfer their rights to the British firm of Manning and Mackintosh during the war with the United States. This was the situation when Trist presented his *projet,* or proposed treaty of peace, to the Mexican commissioners in September, 1847. Included in his original proposal was a stipulation for the right-of-way across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, since the United States was interested in a less difficult water route or land route to California than that offered by crossing the Great American Desert. Trist was authorized to offer five million dollars for these concessions but could go as high as fifteen million if necessary to obtain the grant.[23] The right of transit across Tehuantepec was not to be considered, however, a *sine qua non* to making a treaty. Trist was unable to include this proposal in the resulting Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo since the Mexican commissioners refused to consider such a concession, explaining it was not theirs to give. In their opinion:

> Mexico in 1842 (by decree and compact of Santa Anna), had granted the concession, with title to all unoccupied lands for ten leagues on each side of the route, to José de Garay, a private contractor . . . whose enterprise had first been delayed by the revolution of 1844 which overthrew Santa Anna and alarmed the capitalists, and who later in 1847–48, with the consent of Mexico, transferred it to English subjects, Manning and Mackintosh.[24]

The concession did not remain long in British hands, and, as Mackintosh had previously intimated to the United States government, it was forthwith transferred to American citizens, Peter A. Hargous and his brother of New York. Ownership of the grant was exchanged February 25, 1849. Hargous immediately brought

---

also states that the failure of Congress to accede to President Herrera's request for Peña y Peña was hailed as a triumph for the opposition party. He says that Herrera even contemplated resigning the presidency as a result.

[23] Letter of Secretary of State James Buchanan to Nicolas P. Trist, April 15, 1847, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.,* VIII, 205, in which Trist received his instructions for making a treaty.

[24] J. M. Callahan, *American Foreign Policy in Mexican Relations,* 190; Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 589–590.

the project to the attention of the United States Senate, especially in connection with consideration of contracts for carrying the mail to California. He further urged that Congress not commit itself to favor of the Panamá or any other route.[25] The government of the United States was quick to recognize and to patronize a grant which offered greater attendant privileges than those formerly sought and which had been rejected at Guadalupe Hidalgo. However, this government was apprehensive that

> the Mexican Government is not now, or may not hereafter be, free from influences which would lead it to annul the contract, principally, if not solely, because citizens of the United States may be interested in it.[26]

Such action, of course, would have been looked upon as wholly at variance with the peaceful relations then existing and with the third article of the Treaty of 1831 which stated:

> . . . the citizens of the two countries respectively . . . shall enjoy all the rights, privileges, and exemptions with respect to navigation and commerce, which the citizens of the most favored nation do or may enjoy.[27]

Notice was served through the American minister, Nathan Clifford, that any infringement of the rights of the American proprietors would be regarded with great dissatisfaction by their government.

In reply to this notice, the Mexican Minister of Foreign Relations assured Clifford the Garay grant had not been nullified but

> the question of its validity and forfeiture for non-compliance with obligations under it was exclusively a Mexican affair which must be decided by Mexican law and authority.[28]

President Herrera personally evinced much interest in the construction of a canal or railroad joining the two oceans, realizing its great benefits to Mexico from the economic standpoint as well as its contribution to world-wide commercial development. He also knew that such an undertaking required foreign capital since Mexico's limited financial resources precluded the possibility of her doing it alone. His cabinet, as well as a majority of the liberals in Congress, was generally in agreement with this attitude. There was, however, strong opposition to the project in other quarters which had to be considered in the light of the administration's ability to maintain its political power. Clifford commented on the possible willingness of the Herrera administration to embrace the transit concessions in a formal treaty as follows:

---

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] Letter of John M. Clayton to Nathan Clifford, April 30, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 28.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] Callahan, *op. cit.*, 191.

> It is well known that at least one member of the Cabinet is decidedly in favor of ceding the right to the United States, and is fully prepared to treat upon the question with liberal and enlightened views; and judging from the best lights before me, I think it almost certain that the President and the rest of the Cabinet are ready to concur in the measure whenever it shall be proposed to them by our Government.[29]

When it was known that a treaty was being considered which would give the United States certain rights in Mexican territory, the Herrera régime was subjected to bitter attacks in the opposition press. Even newspapers friendly to the Herrera government objected strenuously. Journals, which had loudly proclaimed against the transfer of the Garay grant to British subjects, were now even more vociferous in denouncing the further transfer to the Hargous brothers. *El Monitor Republicano,* chief organ of the Mexican government, condemned those who had placed Mexico in a position in which she could neither "deny or combat the pretensions"[30] of foreign proprietors. Another article stated that "the Government of the United States had again raised its foot and God only knew where it would be set down."[31] In view of this criticism and political opposition, it was extremely difficult for President Herrera and his ministers to proceed with negotiations on the Tehuantepec transit proposal. The fact that efforts were continued to effect such a treaty at great peril to the administration indicated their sincere desire to coöperate with the United States in the realization of so worthwhile a project.

The United States continued to press for an agreement and sent Robert Letcher to succeed Clifford with the specific purpose of drawing up a convention of guaranty for the protection of the rights and property of American citizens who might engage in the construction of a highway, railway, or canal across the Isthmus. Letcher was instructed to emphasize

> that communication would never be opened except through the agency of foreign capitalists and that these would not embark in the enterprise without a treaty with Mexico guarantying protection thereto.[32]

It was also stated that the American government did not covet any rights of sovereignty over the section of land through Tehuantepec and that this government would not undertake a guaranty of Mexican sovereignty similar to the guaranty of the sovereignty of New Granada at Panama by the treaty of 1846. That treaty was not to be considered a precedent as it was hastily entered into and ratified by the Senate without the usual deliberations. In an effort to allay Mexican fears as to further alienation of land, Secretary of State Clayton affirmed that:

---

[29] Letter of Nathan Clifford to John M. Clayton, August 13, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.,* IX, 339. Clifford further stated that the attitude of the present administration was a noteworthy departure from the policies of previous administrations, "considering the perverseness heretofore manifested by the statesmen of Mexico upon all questions between the two countries."

[30] *El Monitor Republicano,* August 2, 1849.

[31] Letter of Nathan Clifford to John M. Clayton, August 13, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.,* IX, 338.

[32] Memorandum by Chief Clerk of State Department, William Hunter, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.,* IX, 135.

> We could derive no advantage from such an acquisition and are not willing to incur the risks or to bear the burthens which it would entail. Our sole desire is that the sovereignty of that region should remain entire in the Mexican Republic, or subject to those limitations only which she has herself voluntarily imposed in the charter of Don José de Garay.[33]

Briefly stated, the draft of a proposed treaty shortly presented by Letcher to the Mexican authorities contained the following provisions: rights and properties of assignees were to be protected, either nation being empowered to employ military or naval force during and after completion of the project to insure this protection; the United States disavowed any designs upon the sovereignty of Tehuantepec; in case of forfeiture of the grant, it was to be sold at public auction only to private individuals and not to foreign governments or corporations; and transportation rates for American and Mexican citizens, officers, and goods were to be equal.[34] To allay any suspicions among the foreign powers, Clayton informed the British Prime Minister, Palmerston, in October through the American minister to London that:

> we encourage and shall certainly protect all routes, whether by canal or railroad across the American isthmus, and that we invite Great Britain to occupy the same ground, she is to enjoy equal benefits with us, and we all the benefits of the most favored nation.[35]

The British evinced an interest in joining in the guaranty of the integrity of the isthmus, and other nations were asked to support the neutrality of the proposed route, chiefly France and Spain.

The Garay grant was not expressly mentioned in the preliminary treaty concluded with Mexico by Letcher in January, 1850, but it did declare that the actual holder of the grant was expected to give to the American Senate his written consent to the treaty before it would become effective. Meanwhile, on February 20, 1850, Hargous requested protection for a group of surveyors whom he was sending to the Isthmus. José María de Lacunza, Minister of

---

[33] Letter of John M. Clayton to Robert Letcher, September 18, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 40.

[34] Draft of proposed convention quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 40 footnote.

[35] Callahan, *op. cit.*, 192.

Foreign Affairs, assured Letcher that the Governor of Oaxaca had been ordered by President Herrera to "place no obstacle in their way, but rather that the greatest hospitality be shown them."[36]

When the proposed treaty reached the United States Senate, it was found that the meaning of several articles was somewhat obscure, and that body deemed it advisable to suggest several amendments. Upon the presentation of these desired alterations in Mexico, a deluge of opposition resulted. Fear of territorial aggrandizement on the part of the United States was responsible in part for this attitude, but it was also partially due to incitement of opposition by Britain and Spain.[37] This opposition was, during the next administration, to result in the nullification of the Garay grant by the Mexican Congress, an act which further complicated the issue.

On June 22, 1850, Letcher was able to conclude a new convention which contained a few slight alterations from the original draft. American aid in protecting the Isthmus was to be used only when requested by Mexico. It provided for a reduced toll of twenty per cent on Mexican products and an American guaranty of the neutrality of the route for ten leagues on either side. Other nations, by subscribing to the guaranty, might share in the privileges entailed by it. Although Letcher was not entirely satisfied with the terms of the treaty he felt that they were the best obtainable under the circumstances. Even then he was not too optimistic of gaining the approval of the Mexican Congress. Writing to Secretary of State Clayton, June 24, 1850, Letcher said:

> You will see that I have been careful to exclude all idea of a guarantee on our part, of the *sovereignty* to Mexico; confining our eventual interference, only to the *protection of the route, and the territory immediately adjacent*, and that only in the case of a summons from Mexico. With regard to the admission of other nations to the same advantages, there can be no possible doubt or difficulty; as Mexico is ready, at any moment, to allow all the nations of the commercial world to enjoy the same privileges, upon the same terms, as those conceded to the United States, if application should be made to her Government; but she considers it due to herself, that such application should be addressed to her directly.[38]

This indicated a disposition on the part of the United States not to become embroiled in the internal affairs of Mexican politics and evidenced a desire for fairness, frankness, and the equality of all nations in world economic and commercial progress.

---

[36] Translated letter of José María Lacunza to the Governor of Oaxaca, Benito Juárez, April 5, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX 352.

[37] Memorandum by William Hunter, Chief Clerk of the Department of State, June 20, 1853, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 135. It is suggested herein that the British thought that the United States would eventually offer a large sum of money to acquire the transit route. This money, it was hoped, would then be paid to British bondholders.

[38] Letter of Robert Letcher to John M. Clayton, June 24, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 364.

Hargous, the American grantee, however, desired more protection than was hereby afforded and urged

> the need of authority to repress or repel Mexican officials, the need of an American commissioner on the line of construction and an equal voice with Mexico in fixing or changing transportation rates, and also some assurance of protection of the company's property from unjust compensation and violence.[39]

Feeling that his government would extend protection if the occasion demanded, Hargous organized temporarily a stock company, composed of several New Orleans residents, and sent a surveying party to the Isthmus under the command of Major J. G. Barnard of the United States Engineers, assisted by J. J. Williams. The new company was called the Tehuantepec Railroad Company of New Orleans. Upon arrival at Tehuantepec, the surveyors began to "sell lands and woods in the twenty league strip."[40] This action gave to the expedition aspects of a filibustering attempt and served to arouse Mexican suspicions to the point of sending troops to that area for protective purposes. Several vessels of the New Orleans Company were not allowed to land as it was feared that this might result in a reënactment of the Texas episode in the near future.

Owing to such interference, the transit company began to hope that some event would provide the provocation for an actual extension of American sovereignty over the area. Less formidable measures were being contemplated under the direction of Daniel Webster who had recently become Secretary of State. Webster transmitted a draft of a new treaty which, if adopted, would give the isthmus a status suggestive of an American protectorate. Webster's tactics to attain the desired end were not of the high caliber of diplomacy which had heretofore been followed in dealings with the Herrera government. Letcher was instructed to meet anticipated opposition by hinting that, should this new joint method of protection be rejected,

> we will extend our protection to them [American grantees] alone, according to our own sense of right and duty and as future events may require.

Also in the same letter we read:

> . . . if upon a suitable occasion you were to hint, in connexion [*sic*] with this subject, that the money due to Mexico for the extension of the limits of our

---

[39] Callahan, *op. cit.*, 194.

[40] *Ibid.*, 195.

> territory pursuant to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, has not *yet* been paid in full, and that *contingencies might happen* which would warrant this government in withholding it, an impression might be produced favorable to the result of your negotiation.[41]

This more forceful tone and shameless use of financial pressure was much more likely to embarrass negotiations still further rather than facilitate them as Webster had hoped would be the case. Webster evidently did not understand the nature of the proud and sensitive people with whom he was dealing. As Mr. Charles Evans Hughes, United States representative to the Pan American Conference of 1928, has said:

> . . . the people of the Latin-American Republics resent intervention of any sort [or any treaty which might make it possible] of any description anywhere. They are not disposed to draw distinctions or to admit justifications.[42]

Letcher submitted the new draft of the treaty to José María de Lacunza on October 11, 1850; Lacunza promptly stated that his government could not consent to the changes in articles 4 and 11, since they conferred internal police powers in Mexico on the United States. No amount of persuasion by Letcher could induce Lacunza to agree to these articles. Letcher then asked an audience with President Herrera and the entire cabinet in this regard, which Lacunza agreed to arrange. Letcher wrote to Webster on the results of the interview as follows:

> . . . the next day at 11 o'clock was the time fixed upon for this meeting by the permission of the president. At the appointed moment I found the president and his Cabinet, all in attendance. They gave me a cordial reception, and the most attentive and respectful hearing immaginable [*sic*], for an hour and a half; and upon taking leave I was assured in the kindest manner I should have everything I desired, that they could possibly give me.[43]

Two nights later, a cabinet council was held which lasted for four hours, President Herrera and several of the leading members of both houses of Congress being present. After such lengthy debate, the two amendments in question were unanimously rejected. On October 17, Foreign Minister Lacunza communicated the results of the meeting to Letcher in these words:

> . . . I have hardly the heart or courage, to make known to you the decision of last night by the president and all the Cabinet.—The president is grieved, every member of the Cabinet is grieved, and I am most especially grieved to inform you, Mexico, with the strongest desire to maintain the most intimate relations with the United States, is unable to concede the two amendments

---

[41] Letter of Daniel Webster to Robert Letcher, August 24, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 64.

[42] H. G. Miller, *The Isthmian Highway*, 42.

[43] Letter of Robert Letcher to Daniel Webster, October 22, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 369.

to the treaty you have insisted upon with so much earnestness.[44]

There was a new outbreak of vituperation from the press, and Gómez Pedraza, who had signed the transit treaty on June 22, before the Webster amendments were proposed, was called a "vile traitor." The cabinet was accused of bungling and of laying the nation open to further encroachments by the United States. Chief points of criticism by the Mexican cabinet of the proposed amendments seemed to be, according to Letcher, that:

> 1. They infringe upon the sovereignty, the honor, the dignity, and national pride of Mexico.
> 2. To adopt them would be at once to paralize, to disgrace, and in short to overthrow the present administration.
> 3. That a treaty with such provisions would be rejected by the Mexican Congress (probably) without a single dissenting voice, and therefore would be of no use to the United States, whilst at the same time it would be the ruin of the party in power.[45]

Thus it was that Mexican public sentiment, the opposition press, and party politics on the one hand and the demand for internal police powers by the United States on the other defeated the accomplishment of the Tehuantepec transit route with the attendant loss of great commercial benefits to these nations and the world at large. Despite the fact that Herrera and his cabinet, as well as the administration in Washington, desired the completion of the inter-oceanic link, the fears and suspicions created by the recent war were insurmountable obstacles. Although Minister of War Arista intimated to Letcher that he expected to be the next Mexican president and that he would insure adequate military protection for the work during his administration, negotiations in his term met with no better success. On May 23, 1851, the Mexican Congress declared that the extension of Garay's grant in November, 1846, by the provisional government of that date was null and void. Efforts were continued for the next ten years to make a treaty to provide for and protect the construction of the contemplated canal or railroad but these were fruitless. The War between the States and the War of Reform which blossomed out into the French intervention brought an end to these plans for a number of years.

Another problem, the solution of which was begun during Herrera's administration, was that of surveying and marking the new boundary in accordance with Article 5 of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Briefly stated, this article provided that the boundary line should run up the middle of the Rio Grande to the southern boundary of New Mexico, thence westerly along that boundary to its western termination, thence northward to the first branch of the Gila River, and finally down the middle of that branch to the Rio Colorado, along the division line between the Upper and Lower California to the Pacific.[46] The article further provided for the appointment of a joint commission to delineate accurately the new boundary. Each government was required

---

[44] *Ibid.*, 369–370. This excerpt of Lacunza's note included in Letcher's letter.
[45] *Ibid.*, 370.

> to appoint a commissioner and a surveyor, who shall meet at the port of San Diego, and proceed to run and mark the said boundary in its whole course to the mouth of the Rio Bravo del Norte [Rio Grande]. They shall keep Journals and make out plans of their operations; and the result agreed upon by them shall be deemed a part of this treaty.[47]

President Herrera, with the approval of Congress, arranged for the appointment of the Mexican Boundary Commission on November 2, 1848. It was to be composed of a commissioner, a surveyor, and two engineers.[48] General Pedro García Conde was selected as chief of the party. The group departed for San Diego on April 18, 1849, to meet with the American Boundary Commission which had been appointed by President Polk.[49] There was some initial delay due to the unfortunate death of the American commissioner, Mr. Sevier.[50] He was replaced by a Mr. Bartlett.

The work of surveying the western part of the boundary progressed slowly for several months until the first of February, 1840, when the United States members asked for a delay until November before continuing with the survey. General García Conde apparently consented to do so but protested to his government this dilatory action on the part of the United States delegation. Consequently, the Mexican Minister in Washington, Luis de la Rosa, notified Secretary of State Clayton that the delay was in no way due to the Mexican Commission and urged the speedy completion of the work. De la Rosa said:

> The government of the Undersigned, was especially desirous to know, if there had been any fault or delay on the part of the Commissioners of that

---

[46] W. M. Malloy, *Treaties and Conventions of the United States*, I, 1107, Article 5.

[47] *Ibid.* Also see letter of William L. Marcy, Secretary of State, to James Gadsden, United States Minister to Mexico, July 15, 1853, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 137.

[48] *Leyes y decretos*, I, Doc. 181, Decree of November 2, 1848. The salary of the commissioner was to be 700 pesos a month, 600 for the surveyor and 300 each for the engineers.

[49] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 157, states that the commission left Mexico City on April 18, headed by General Pedro García Conde.

[50] Letter of Nathan Clifford to Luis G. Cuevas, Mexican Minister of Foreign Relations, February 9, 1849, quoted in *Notes from the United States Minister in Mexico to the Mexican Government, 1848–1853*, IV, Department of State Archives, Library of Congress.

> republic which could have caused any interruption in the settlement of the boundaries. From the information datas [*sic*] which the government of Mexico has received in connection with this subject, it is fully convinced that the aforesaid operations could not have been interrupted or suspended in consequence of any fault or deficiency on the part of the Mexican Commissioners. From the information and datas [*sic*], which the government of the undersigned has collected together, it must be inferred, that if the task of defining the boundary line, has been suspended and postponed until the month of November of the present year, it has resulted entirely from the fact, that the Commissioners of the United States have frequently been absent in California, and that latterly, the said Commissioners, with some exceptions, have not participated in the operations of settling the boundaries. It was these same Commissioners of the United States who proposed, as the only means by which these important labors could be continued, that the prosecution of the same should be delayed until next November. General García Conde, Chief of the Mexican Commission, in agreeing to this proposition, only yielded to the force of necessity; and although this chief found himself encompassed with difficulties, to continue in the discharge of his duties, yet he was determined, as he intimated it to the United States Commissioners, not to interrupt the operations, the management of which had been entrusted to him by his government. The government of the Undersigned deems it expedient that the government of the United States should be fully advised of these facts; in order that if in future the unsettled state of the boundaries beween the two republics should unfortunately give rise to any unpleasant difference between them, no blame whatever may be imputed to the government of Mexico, which believes to have done all that duty required, to carry out the stipulations of the fifth article of the treaty of Guadalupe.[51]

De la Rosa not only urged that the United States government take the necessary action to speed the settlement of the boundaries but also added that his government would expect reimbursement for expenses of the Mexican Commission that might be occasioned by the unreasonable delay.[52]

One month later, de la Rosa again addressed a note to Secretary Clayton on May 19, concerning the same subject:

> According to the representations made by the undersigned to the Secretary of State, in his note of the 20th of April, the chief of the Mexican Commission, for settling the boundaries, found himself under the necessity of complying with the wishes of the Commissioners of the republic, that the operations should be suspended, to be resumed on the 1st Monday of November

---

[51] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, April 20, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX 357–358.

[52] *Ibid.*, 358. The Mexican Minister stated that the commission and military escort for its protection had already cost his government $40,000 which it could ill afford to waste. "If these expenses, or a part of them, should prove to have been useless, in consequence of any plea that may hereafter be presented, for the commencing of the operations anew, upon which the final settlement of the boundary depends, the Undersigned trusts that the government of the United States will not deny to Mexico the right of claiming indemnification for these losses."

next, by way of the Northern passage *(por el Paso del Norte)*. The Undersigned has been instructed by his government to inquire whether the government of the United States has approved of the Convention made between these two Commissions and whether the necessary arrangments [*sic*] can be made with safety, in order that the Mexican Commissioners may repair to the *(Paso del Norte)* in due season, so that the labors of settling the boundaries may be resumed on the day and at the point agreed upon.[53]

In reply to the first of these notes, Secretary of State Clayton stated that Mr. Rosa's note of April 20 had been passed to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior "who has been charged by the President with the business to which it relates."[54] On May 23, Clayton wrote to de la Rosa again on the matter including a reply from Secretary of the Interior, Thomas Ewing, to both letters of the Mexican Minister. His answer was not too satisfactory or clarifying as to the reasons for stoppage of the survey.

> The interruption which has taken place in the labors of the Commission by an adjournment from about the 1st of February ult. to the first Monday in November next, being a period of nine months, is justly a matter of complaint on the part of the two governments. The adjournment, however, was a joint act, and there must, therefore, be a joint responsibility.
>
> This Department has instituted a thorough investigation into the proceedings of the Commission and is unable to discover any satisfactory reason for the interruption.
>
> Being deeply solicitous for the rapid progress and early completion of the Survey, the Department has relieved from service the U. S. Commissioner, and the Commission on the part of the United States will soon be reorganized with a view to imparting to it the highest degree of efficiency, and will be promptly in the field for a renewal of operations on the day and at the place named in the adjournment. Meanwhile, in accordance with instructions already issued to Major W. H. Emory, Acting U. S. Commissioner, the line of boundary between the initial point on the Pacific, and the confluence of the waters of the Gila and the Colorado Rivers, will be completed, on our side with the least possible delay.
>
> The heavy expense incurred by the Republic of Mexico in the prosecution of the work has been much more than equalled by that of the United States.[55]

It is apparent from this letter that the United States government did not approve of its commission's course of action. The Secretary of the Interior not only recognized Mexico's justification in making a complaint but signified a desire to complete the work at the earliest possible moment by appointing a new commission.

---

[53] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, May 19, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 361.

[54] Letter of John M. Clayton to Luis de la Rosa, April 27, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 52.

[55] Letter of Thomas Ewing, Secretary of the Interior, to John M. Clayton, May 21, 1850, enclosed in Clayton's letter to Luis de la Rosa, May 23, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 54.

When the joint commission again met at El Paso in the fall, still further difficulties were encountered. Mr. Gray, the American surveyor, was not present and Mr. Bartlett, the commissioner, illegally appointed a Lieutenant Whipple as surveyor. The United States government, when it learned of these events, declared the appointment of Whipple null and void since it had not empowered Bartlett to make such a selection. Mr. Gray was then superseded by a Colonel Graham, who refused to concur in the commission's location of an initial starting point. He discovered that this point of 32° 22′ was in error and gave to Mexico a strip of land thirty-four miles in width along the southern border of New Mexico, which was not in keeping with the boundary as outlined in the treaty.[56] This discrepancy was later corrected, but the details of the problem carried over and were not the concern of President Herrera's government.

There were many border incidents that tried the patience of both nations. It does not serve our purpose to examine each case separately but only to point out the general nature of these problems, using a few cases as examples. One of the most irritating causes of friction concerned the incursions and depredations of savage Indian tribes, such as the Apaches and Comanches, who were continually crossing from the United States into the exposed northern provinces of Mexico and were committing every specie of crime and barbarity upon the defenseless Mexican settlements and haciendas in those regions. The Mexican government protested the United States government's inability to restrain the Indians as an infraction of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, since that nation was thereby pledged to hold the Indians in check. United States troops were sent to the newly-ceded territories and several forts were established; but these were no more adequate to control the Indians in the vast expanses of Texas, New Mexico, and California than were the meager Mexican forces sent to protect the settlers in Tamaulipas, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, and the other frontier states. Unscrupulous white traders on the American side of the border contracted with the savages to buy all the plunder they brought back from their raids into Mexico. Stolen horses and mules were particularly desirable and were, in turn, sold to miners and settlers going to California. Other American citizens, undeserving of the name, organized armed bands and made what were known as "blood contracts" with the Mexican states of Sonora, Chihuahua, and Coahuila to kill or capture the unfriendly Indians on a graduated price scale. These contracts were deplored by the Herrera government as inhuman while other states of the interior, not subjected to the Indian pillaging parties, criticized this action as murderous and uncivilized. To make matters worse, these armed bands of whites often killed friendly Indians knowingly in an effort to collect the bounties offered.[57] In retaliation these friendly Indians usually took their revenge on the nearest settlements which were totally ignorant and innocent of the acts precipitating the raids.

---

[56] Letter of William L. Marcy, Secretary of State, to James Gadsden, United States Minister to Mexico, July 15, 1853, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 137–138.

The Herrera government instructed de la Rosa on several occasions to make protest to the United States government concerning that government's obligations to restrain the Indians as provided in Article 11 of the Treaty. In a letter to John M. Clayton, Secretary of State, on March 20, 1850, de la Rosa said:

> The Undersigned is persuaded, that the only advantage which can accrue to Mexico, from the treaty which happily terminated that war between that Republic and the United States,—the only advantage which can compensate her for the many sacrifices which that peace rendered necessary on her part—is the exact fulfillment of all the obligations contracted by the United States towards Mexico in the said eleventh article of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. . . . The Undersigned again calls the attention of the Hon. Secretary of State, to the necessity of putting an end to the atrocities of all kinds, so frequently committed by the wild Indians, residing in the territory of the United States, on the inhabitants of the frontiers of Mexico.[58]

In April, de la Rosa again wrote to Clayton that emigrants on their way to California were inciting the Apaches to make plundering expeditions into the state of Sonora with the object of purchasing their spoils.

> . . . several parties of armed emigrants from the United States, in passing to Alta California, through the territory of the Mexican Republic, have begun to introduce themselves into the State of Sonora, where they place themselves in contact with the Apache Indians, and sometimes, aid them in committing

---

[57] An example of this is revealed in the following letter of Brevet Major Edwin B. Babbitt to Brevet Major General Thomas S. Jesup at San Antonio, Texas, October 15, 1849. "A party of Americans has engaged in the service of the State of Chihuahua to kill and destroy Indians, for whose scalps they are to receive from $5 to $500 according to the official importance of the victim. These men have recently crossed into our territory, near the Presidio del Norte, and killed and scalped a number of peaceable and friendly Indians, which has so exasperated the Indians along the whole frontier, that the life of every white man who may fall into their power must pay the cost. Nothing short of a very general hostility on the part of the Indians against the whites is anticipated, as the result of the shameful conduct of these degraded mercenaries who bear the name of Americans."—Quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 44.

[58] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, March 20, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 351.

> with impunity, aggressions upon the isolated and defenseless settlements of that State. Some of the emigrating parties have sought to pass as military forces, belonging to the Government of the United States. These emigrants, besides furnishing arms and munitions to the Savages, purchase from them the property which they daily plunder from the Mexicans. A short time ago, some Indians who were in the pay of the State of Sonora, for making war upon the Apaches, informed the Government of that State, that in an attack upon an Apache rancho, they encountered a force of Americans, who defended it, and remained there, encouraging the Apaches to steal Horses and Mules, which the emigrants offered to buy from them, to be taken to Alta California.[59]

Another United States force of about one hundred and fifty men under the leadership of John Hays of Texas and John Carpenter of New Orleans was found in January near the old fort of Janos in Sonora. The leader of the Mexicans who found them asked what they were doing there without permission from Mexico. Their reply was that they were seeking to make peace with the Apaches on behalf of both nations. The Mexican authorities, having no information such a commission had been authorized, and fearful that the real purpose of this group was to ally with the Apaches, sent them on their way by the "nearest and most convenient route."[60]

Secretary Clayton promised de la Rosa to take up these matters with the President of the United States who in turn would request the proper remedial legislation in Congress. The Mexican Minister, after several months had elapsed, wrote to the new Secretary of State, Daniel Webster, that he had not been advised of what had been done by Congress to make effective the provisions of the eleventh article of the treaty and requested information on this subject which he might forward to his government.[61] On December 5, de la Rosa observed that the President of the United States had called the attention of Congress to the necessity of increasing the military force on the frontier but the Mexican Minister also urged the need of immediate action.

> There are, however, two reasons which render the adoption of military measures to prevent the incursions of Indian Savages upon Mexico extremely necessary. The first is that winter, is already at hand,—this being the season when the Indians make their annual incursions and commit their acts of devastation and atrocity upon the frontier population of Mexico. The second reason is that, in consequence of the loss of their crops this year, the aforesaid population is now actually suffering from great scarcity of food, and if they had to contend with the savages in this condition, they would

---

[59] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, April 17, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 365.

[60] *Ibid.*, 356.

[61] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, September 4, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 368.

> be exterminated, or at least exposed to much greater ravages than they ever have experienced in any former incursions.[62]

Webster replied on December 9, that Mr. de la Rosa's note of the fifth had been put in the President's hands "who will forthwith communicate the same to Congress."[63]

The government of the United States endeavored to comply with its obligations in this regard by referring the just complaints of the Mexican government to the War Department for direct action and to Congress for supplementary legislation. As has been pointed out the scarcity of troops in such a large area made it impossible to curtail the activities of the Indians at all places and at all times. The following is quoted from a letter of Charles M. Conrad, Secretary of War, as evidence of the good faith of the United States and the efforts of the War Department in attempting to control the Indians.

> Orders have been given and preparations are now being made for expeditions against the tribes in the vicinity of Mexico, particularly the Camanches [*sic*], the Navajoes [*sic*], the Apaches and the Utahs, with a view to inflict severe chastisement upon them and to compel them to a more faithful observance of treaties, of which, heretofore, they have been utterly regardless. I will also add that measures have been taken with a view to a more energetic protection of the country, and instructions given to the Commander of the forces in New Mexico in his selection of Military Posts in that country to look mainly to the protection of the Mexican Territory—similar instructions will also be given to the officer who is about to take command of the forces in Texas.[64]

These inroads of Indians, armed bands of American brigands, and emigrants on their way to California, also represented illegal entry into the territory of Mexico. There were other violations of Mexico's territorial integrity and sovereignty which related to the pursuit of runaway slaves into Mexico by the citizens concerned and the occasional pursuit of deserters from the United States army over the boundary. One such incident involving a fugitive slave was reported and protested by Luis de la Rosa on behalf of President Herrera's government on March 19, 1850.

> On the 19th of January last, four or five soldiers of a detachment on the frontiers of the United States; stationed at a place called Piedras Negras, opposite the ford of the Aguila, introduced themselves, armed, into the Mexican territory, in the State of Coahuila, and going to a Rancho, belonging

---

[62] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to Daniel Webster, December 5, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 375–376.

[63] Letter of Daniel Webster to Luis de la Rosa, December 9, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 66.

[64] Letter of Charles M. Conrad, Secretary of War, to William S. Derrick, Acting Secretary of State, April 2, 1851, enclosed in Derrick's letter to Luis de la Rosa, April 9, 1851, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 70.

> to the town of Guerrero, they beat and outraged two or three citizens of that Rancho, and even the women who inhabit it, in order to carry away by force, as they did, a coloured man, who was there a fugutive [*sic*] from Texas . . . and the Undersigned . . . hopes that proper measures will be taken, as speedily as possible, for having those who may be found guilty of this aggression, punished according to the laws.[65]

In reply, Secretary Clayton advised him:

> that a translation of his note has been communicated to the Secretary of War, whose province it is to attend to the subject, and who will lose no time in adopting the measures necessary for an investigation into the complaint and for the redress of any grievance of which Mexico has a right to complain.[66]

The War Department later reported that soldiers had not been involved but that this complaint, without doubt,

> originated from the fact that a man named McIntire, a citizen of Washington County, Texas, crossed into Mexico with several persons, in pursuit of a fugitive slave whom he captured and brought back to our side of the lines.[67]

In May, 1850, the Herrera administration brought to the attention of the State Department that soldiers from Fort Duncan, Texas, had crossed into Mexico and had taken two deserters in San Fernando de Rosas and had returned them to the fort without the knowledge or permission of the Mexican authorities. De la Rosa protested this violation of Mexican territory as follows:

> This act, being a violation of the Mexican territory, the military inspector in chief of the eastern division, with the knowledge of the government of Mexico, has given orders to his subordinate officers, to the effect, that if any other attempt should be made to remove from the territory of that Republic any individual residing in it, no matter where he may have come from, or what may be his native country, that such an attempt be resisted, even by force if necessary . . . . [It is hoped] that directions will be given to the military commanders and other authorities and inhabitants on the American frontier, in order that they may on their part prevent the occurrence of the grievous scenes alluded to.[68]

This note was also referred to the War Department for a redress of the grievance. In an effort to eliminate these and many similar occurrences, an extradition treaty was consummated between

---

[65] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, March 19, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 350.

[66] Letter of John M. Clayton to Luis de la Rosa, March 21, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 50.

[67] Report by Brevet Major John M. Scott to Lieutenant F. J. Denman, Adjutant First Infantry, Fort Duncan, Texas, May 10, 1850, included in a letter of John M. Clayton to Luis de la Rosa, July 6, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 56.

[68] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, May 6, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 359.

Mexico and the United States on August 28, 1850.[69] This did much to reduce this type of friction by providing a means whereby each nation could deliver to the other criminals and fugitives who hoped to escape by crossing the border.

Other border disputes arose over the mistreatment of Mexican customs officials at Matamoros by citizens of Brownsville,[70] alleged discrimination and mistreatment of Mexicans residing near placer mines in Upper California,[71] and numerous murders, robberies, and smuggling activities attributed by both nations to citizens of the other.[72] These episodes often brought the local authorities as well as the military forces into conflict with each other. Official conduct for the most part by both nations along the border was restrained and indicated a mutual desire to keep the peace and to forestall and prevent any unpleasant events. Both the government of President Herrera and that of the United States coöperated in an effort to correct abuses which were a natural and expected result of the high feeling engendered by the war.

Another provision of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that caused some difficulty was that which provided for the repatriation of Mexican citizens residing in the ceded territories. These people were given the choice of remaining in those areas under United States protection of their persons and property with the right either to elect American citizenship or to be moved across the border to Mexican soil at that government's expense. The Herrera administration had passed a law on August 19, 1848, to effect their repatriation.

Those in New Mexico were to go to Chihuahua; those on the left bank of the Rio Bravo, to Tamaulipas, Coahuila or Nuevo León, and those of Upper

---

[69] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 206. Also referred to in *Discurso . . . por el presidente de la república mexicana, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 4.

[70] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, July 21, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 335–336. De la Rosa said that customs officials at Matamoros were frequently insulted and ill treated by the inhabitants of Brownsville, especially those who were engaged in smuggling. He cited the case of John Webb, accused of smuggling, and implied the collusion of Judge Bigelow of Brownsville.

[71] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, October 19, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 346–347. It was claimed that "Mexicans are forcibly prevented from residing at those points—that they are robbed, they are outraged and even are made to embark by force in order to make them quit that territory."

[72] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, April 16, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 353. It would appear from the diplomatic correspondence of the period that citizens of the United States were the offenders in the majority of the cases.

California were to be given lands in Lower California or Sonora. The commissioners appointed for each area were to confer with their respective state governments to agree on lands to be set aside for the immigrants.[73]

A sum of 200,000 pesos was appropriated by the Mexican Congress to put the program into effect. Although this amount was inadequate to complete the project, a start was made, and the three commissioners were appointed. When one of the commissioners arrived to carry out his mission, he found this difficulty:

> The Commissioner of the Government of the undersigned, on his arrival in New Mexico, found the authorities of this Republic well disposed to the accomplishment of his mission; but the desire which the Mexican families quickly showed to speak with the Commissioner and the agitation and haste with which they called him from different points, or collected to see him, caused the political authority of New Mexico to think, incorrectly, that this pacific commotion of the Mexicans would compromise public tranquility. Thereafter that authority put such obstacles in the way of the Commissioner of Mexico that they made it absolutely impossible for him to discharge his mission. He was not permitted personally to visit the settlements of New Mexico nor to send subcommissioners to them, and not even was the recourse of promoting the emigration of the Mexicans by means of the press left to him, because the publishers of the few periodicals that are printed there were prevented from publishing his invitations. In consequence of this opposition the Government of the undersigned has seen that the efforts hitherto made and the expenses incurred for the promotion of the emigration of Mexican families have been useless . . . .
>
> . . . The Secretary of State will understand at once that it is impossible to accomplish this unless one or more commissioners of the Government of Mexico shall pass to the places where those families now reside, be placed into contact with them, and arrange, through agreements with the same, the costs of their transfer and the time and manner in which it shall be accomplished.[74]

It would be gathered from this statement that fear of mob violence was the reason for interference with the Mexican Commissioner's mission. Secretary Clayton referred this complaint to the Secretary of War who issued orders to the proper authorities in New Mexico to coöperate in every way possible with the Mexican agents in the repatriation of her nationals who were desirous of being transferred.

No filibustering expeditions from the United States entered Mexico during the presidency of Herrera. However, anxious moments were caused both nations when the Mexican vice-consul at New Orleans reported to Mexican Minister de la Rosa that an expedition of invaders was being formed at Round Island. He said that he had good reason to believe that the expedition "would move against Yucatán, Tampico, or some other point along the coast of the Mexican Republic."[75] Apparently, the government of the United States already had word of the activities of this group and had taken precautions to prevent its causing any difficulty. In reply to de la Rosa's notification of these developments, Secretary Clayton stated:

---

[73] *Leyes y decretos,* 1848, I, Doc. 123, pp. 307–314; Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII. 86–87.

[74] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, September 18, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.,* IX, 344–345.

> . . . whatever may be the destination of that expedition, no doubt is entertained that the measures adopted by this government for frustrating its apparent purposes of violating the laws passed for the maintenance of the neutrality of the United States and their peace with friendly nations, will be effectual.[76]

Secretary Clayton evidently referred to President Zachary Taylor's public proclamation of August 11, 1849, which made plain his government's policy toward all filibustering attempts. The proclamation read as follows:

> It is the duty of this Government to observe the faith of treaties and to prevent any aggression by our citizens upon the territories of friendly nations. I have therefore thought it necessary and proper to issue this proclamation to warn all citizens of the United States who shall connect themselves with an enterprise so grossly in violation of our laws and our treaty obligations that they will thereby subject themselves to the heavy penalties denounced against them by our acts of Congress and will forfeit their claim to the protection of this country.[77]

This warning had the desired effect, and the Round Island expedition never materialized. President Herrera's government was gratified to see the decided and friendly attitude expressed in Taylor's prompt action. Another occasion for rejoicing in the Mexican capital was the affirmation by Secretary of State Buchanan in October, 1848, that a rumored attempt by citizens of the United States designed to revolutionize and establish an independent Republic of the Sierra Madre composed of the northern states of Mexico had been frustrated. Replies to the State Department's circular addressed to the District Attorneys of the United States revealed that the venture, "if it ever existed, had exploded."[78]

---

[75] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, September 20, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 345.

[76] Letter of John M. Clayton to Luis de la Rosa, September 24, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX 42.

[77] Proclamation to the Nation, August 11, 1849, by President Zachary Taylor quoted in *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Vol. VI, 2545.

[78] Letter of James Buchanan to Nathan Clifford, October 10, 1848, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 5. It had been alleged that certain citizens of Brownsville were interested in the project of setting up an independent republic of the seven northern provinces during the preceding year. Rivera Cambas also mentions a Sr. Domínguez of Brownsville as one of these *contra-guerrillos.*

Secretary Buchanan pointed out that

> the vigorous and successful efforts which we have made to defeat this expedition are the strongest evidence of our desire to execute the late Treaty in good faith.[79]

This friendly and coöperative spirit was to continue throughout President Herrera's administration. A further expression of this feeling may be found in Secretary Clayton's assurance of February 15, 1850:

> . . . Mr. de la Rosa and his government . . . may be assured that nothing within the constitutional power of the government of the United States shall be omitted which may be necessary faithfully to discharge the stipulations in its treaties with the Mexican Republic and the obligations of *good* neighborhood.[80]

Of course, there were the routine difficulties of arrest and imprisonment of nationals, commercial problems of citizens requiring diplomatic intervention, illegal entries, and the like which occupied most of the time of diplomatic and consular officials of both nations. Two incidents may be worthy of mention. The first concerned the theft by American troops of religious images and the baptismal font from the parochial church of Vera Cruz during the evacuation of United States troops from that port. These images were brought to New York, but the local authorities prevented their sale; and they were turned over to the Catholic Churches of St. Charles Borromeo and St. Paul in Brooklyn for safe-keeping. The second incident was of a more serious nature. At Mazatlán, the American consul, John Parrott, abducted a Mr. R. B. Wethers who was placed on board the United States sloop of war *Falmouth.* Wethers was wanted in Alta California for a murder, and Parrott apparently took it upon himself to return the alleged criminal. This was done in spite of the demand of the Mexican district judge of the state of Sinaloa for his release. This violation of Mexican law and territory was protested by the Mexican government. Consul Parrott was removed from office and Wethers was set free since his seizure had been illegal[81] and since there was no federal court in California to order his return to Mexico.

---

[79] *Ibid.* Also see letter of Robert M. Walsh to James Buchanan, November 13, 1848, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 302.

[80] Letter of John M. Clayton to Luis de la Rosa, February 15, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 47. It would appear that the Good Neighbor Policy had its beginnings here.

[81] Letter of Luis de la Rosa to John M. Clayton, June 14, 1850, and letter of Clayton to de la Rosa, June 17, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 362 and 55 respectively.

Although there had been many serious problems pending with the United States as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, negotiations had been carried on in the most amicable manner, and most of these problems had been dissolved to the satisfaction of both republics. The dire results predicted by the enemies of President Herrera in regard to his policy of friendship and coöperation with the United States had not materialized. Instead, the United States had done everything in its power to strengthen the government of Mexico and to observe scrupulously her obligations to her. President Herrera expressed pleasure over the way in which relations with the United States had been conducted "upon a basis of complete equality as befits the dignity of Mexico."[82]

At the beginning of President Herrera's administration, the following major powers had accredited representatives in the Mexican capital: the United States was represented by Clifford, Prussia by Seiffast, Great Britain by Doyle, France by Goury, and Spain by Armenta. By the end of 1848, Goury had been replaced by M. Levasseur and Clifford was later replaced by Robert Letcher. The diplomatic corps extended its congratulations to President Herrera on his election and as was customary repeated this performance on the first of every new year.[83] President Herrera was highly regarded by these foreign representatives, and the best of relations existed between the foreign diplomatic corps and the Chief Executive. Commenting on his relationship with the representatives of foreign governments in Mexico, the President said:

> I should give here and now before retiring from the government, a vote of thanks to the foreign diplomatic corps, for the wisdom and friendly disposition toward Mexico which it has generally shown in its dealings, and I hope that continuing in the same manner, the object of their diplomatic missions will be realized, to wit: the continuation of peace and with it the fostering of reciprocal commercial relations.[84]

As for Mexican representatives at foreign capitals, President Herrera made no changes in these appointments during his term.

Possibly second in importance to Mexico in the field of diplomacy were her relations with Great Britain. These were chiefly concerned with the settlement of the foreign debt, of which English creditors were the largest holders, and with alleged British aid to the Yucatán Indians in their war with the whites of the peninsula. It was shown in the discussion of the financial problems of the

---

[82] *Discurso . . . por el presidente de la república mexicana, . . . el día 1 de enero de 1851*, p. 3.

[83] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 85 ff., 113, 181.

[84] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín de Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 5.

Herrera administration how the foreign debt owed to British bondholders was reduced from over seventy-six million pesos to fifty-one million two hundred thousand pesos, with the rate of interest lowered from five to three per cent. This arrangement came as a result of the law of February 19, 1850, which authorized the Minister of Finance to enter into negotiations with these creditors to consolidate and fund the debt. The British bondholders were more amenable to Mexico's proposal, because of the added security offered by the indemnity payments from the United States. Minister of Finance Payno's subsequent scheme for consolidating and funding the internal debt also affected certain British bondholders. This plan, provided by the law of November 30, 1850, was not so acceptable as the one relating to the foreign debt. There was much discontent among the British bondholders due to the drastic reductions in principal and interest on certain classifications of debt and to an uncertain guarantee of payment which it was feared might even result in further repudiation.[85] Much of the work of the British *chargé d'affaires*, Doyle, was in connection with presenting the claims and views of Her Majesty's subjects in these financial matters.

The question of aid to the Indians of Yucatán in the race war by British citizens in Belize is also discussed elsewhere in greater detail.[86] After virtually ignoring several protests by President Herrera's government concerning the alleged British interference in Yucatán and a demand on the part of Mexico for British observance of strict neutrality, the English Governor of Belize offered his mediation between the two opposing forces in the peninsula. Neither Mexico nor the United States believed Britain to be completely disinterested in this matter, and the United States in particular watched events with a wary eye.[87] Mexico and Yucatán, being desirous of peace, finally agreed to accept mediation. These efforts brought a temporary truce, but violations of the armistice by both whites and Indians prevented the realization of a permanent peace.

British influence was also felt in regard to negotiations between the United States and Mexico concerning the proposed transit route across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. England had shown an interest in being included in any agreement on this subject. She indicated that she wished to enjoy the benefits of such a project and to guarantee the protection and neutrality of the interoceanic highway. This, at least, was the attitude that superficial appearances revealed. It was later felt, however, in the United States that Great Britain and Spain had secretly worked to defeat her efforts to make a treaty with Mexico that would give the necessary protection to the American grantees of the right of transit to enable them to undertake the actual construction. This opinion was supported by French Minister Levasseur, who hinted at "covert intrigues on the part of the English Government to prevent any adjustment of the Tehuantepec question."[88] Alfred Conkling, United States Minister to Mexico, in 1852, stated:

---

[85] For details of these financial relations, refer to the chapter entitled "Political and Financial Problems."

[86] Refer to the first part of the chapter on "Racial Warfare" on this topic.

[87] Letter of Robert M. Walsh, U. S. *chargé d'affaires ad interim* at Mexico City, to John M. Clayton, October 13, 1849, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 346. *Memoria del ministerio de relaciones interiores y esteriores, leída al congreso general en enero, 1850*, p. 8.

> The motive he [Levasseur] ascribes to England for this interference, is a design long cherished and steadily pursued, to appropriate to herself the whole of Yucatán; a design which, as he supposes, they imagined might be frustrated or impeded by the creation of new interests on the part of the United States in the vicinity. It was, he added, only by the imputation to England of such a design that he could account for the fact that she has persisted in furnishing arms and subsistence to the Indians of Yucatán to enable them to maintain their hostile attitude towards the Mexican authorities, without which aid, he said, the Indians would at no time have been able to hold their ground for a single month.[89]

This opinion of Levasseur's must be taken with a grain of national self interest. Another theory as to the reasons for British opposition to a Tehuantepec treaty with the United States is more substantial. It was suggested that Britain urged Mexico to hold out in signing an agreement granting transit privileges anticipating that the United States would offer a large sum of money to Mexico to obtain the desired result. This money, it was the British hope, would be used to satisfy British creditors.[90] Undoubtedly, Great Britain desired the construction of the transit route under her own auspices and regretted that her subjects, Manning and Mackintosh, who had held the privilege in 1847–1848, had sold their rights to the Hargous brothers of New York. The most that can be said of possible British maneuvering in this matter is that these charges were based on conjecture rather than indisputable fact.

---

[88] Letter of Alfred Conkling, United States Minister to Mexico, to Edward Everett, Secretary of State, December 24, 1852, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 523.

[89] *Ibid.*

[90] Memorandum by William Hunter, Chief Clerk of Department of State, June 20, 1853, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX 136.

From the standpoint of the Herrera government, relations with England were generally good with the exception of the Yucatán incident.[91] The arrangement of the foreign debt problem was of particular value. England's policy was directed toward the maintenance and increase of commercial and economic privileges of which she already enjoyed the lion's share. In this, she was moderately successful but the United States was beginning to offer real competition.

Relations with Spain were considered by Mexico to be very satisfactory. Spain had been sympathetic with Mexico in her war with the United States. She had also refused to accept sovereignty over Yucatán when that distressed state had offered it during 1847–1848, in an effort to find protection from the Indians. Of course, Britain and the United States had done likewise. Spain had shown her good will, however, by using her ships to carry the white inhabitants of Yucatán to places of safety and had also supplied them with rifles and munitions with which to defend themselves. This action was greatly appreciated by President Herrera, and Mexico reciprocated by prompt payment in full for these war materials.[92]

Such friendly gestures on the part of the Spanish government were made with the hope of regaining some of the lost Spanish influence in America and in developing a feeling of Pan-Hispanicism.[93] The new Spanish minister, Armenta, in the Mexican capital proved to be very agreeable. Spain acquiesced in the Mexican debt consolidation proposals and in every way tried to coöperate with the government of President Herrera. Minister of Foreign Relations Lacunza praised the "frankness and good faith" evidenced at all times by the Spanish cabinet.[94] Various commercial agreements and conventions, including the renewal of a treaty of amity and friendship, were made.[95] Spain also outwardly appeared to be interested in joining in the guarantee of a transit route across Tehuantepec, but the United States felt she and Britain were in reality working to defeat her efforts to make a treaty with Mexico on this subject.[96]

---

[91] *Memorias del ministro de relaciones de enero, 1849, y 1850*, pp. 18 and 8 respectively, from *Colección de memorias de relaciones*, III, Docs 21 and 22.

[92] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín de Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 7.

[93] Arboleya, *España y Méjico*, I, 104 ff. The author states that had Spain desired to incorporate Yucatán, Mexico and the United States would have been powerless to resist. True friendship only prompted her decision to desist.

[94] *Memoria del ministerio de relaciones interiores y esteriores, leída al congreso general en enero de 1850*, p. 19.

[95] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 133.

Diplomatic relations with France showed a marked improvement during the administration of President Herrera. In 1845, there had been the unpleasant incident of the French minister, Baron de Ciprey, at the public bath. No such episode occurred during the ministerships of M. Goury and M. Levasseur who held successively the assignment to the Mexican capital during Herrera's second term of office. Commercial agreements made in 1847 were renewed with slight changes beneficial to Mexico. In January, 1849, Foreign Minister Cuevas stated that France had shown a "benevolent and generous" spirit in her negotiations with his government. He also praised the work of M. Goury and said that he felt sure M. Levasseur, who had replaced Goury, would be "animated by the same noble sentiments as his predecessor."[97] During this period France more or less followed the lead of Great Britain in her dealings with the Mexican Republic. There was this difference, however, according to the Mexican historian, Rivera Cambas, who states that France was working with the monarchist faction in Mexico with the object of bringing over a European king to rule. Britain, on the other hand, he says, was sympathetic to the Herrera régime, content with her position of economic dominance.[98] This is easily believed in the light of future events which brought the French intervention and the arrival of Emperor Maximilian in Mexico.[99]

On September 6, 1848, Guatemala accredited a minister plenipotentiary and envoy extraordinary to Mexico in the person of Neri del Barrio. Minister of Foreign Relations Cuevas attributed the fine feeling existing between the two nations to their similar "language, customs and origin." He also praised Guatemala for "the interest that she and her government showed on behalf of Mexico during the foreign invasion."[100] During the presidency of Herrera, an Extradition Treaty was made with Guatemala similar to that effected with the United States. The date of the treaty was November 30, 1850.[101] Negotiations were also begun to enter into a treaty of limits the purpose of which was to define the boundary between the two countries, a matter pending since independence.[102] Both Chile and Ecuador sent Consuls General to the Mexican capital during this period. The Herrera government dispatched a *misión extraordinaria* to Rome to carry on relations with the Vatican.[103] The work of the mission was conducted with a harmony which had "never been interrupted,"[104] according to Foreign Minister Cuevas. Of chief interest was the invitation by President Herrera to the Pope to come to live in Mexico where "seven million faithful souls" awaited him. Pius IX graciously declined this generous offer.

---

[96] Letter of Robert P. Letcher to John M. Clayton, March 16, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.*, IX, 349.

[97] *Memoria del ministro de relaciones interiores y esteriores, D. Luis G. Cuevas, leída en la cámara de diputados el 5, y en la de senadores el 8 de enero de 1849*, p. 18, from *Colección de memorias de relaciones*, III, Doc. 21.

[98] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 75.

[99] Maximilian and his beautiful wife, Carlota, arrived in the Mexican capital June 12, 1864, misled into believing that he was the choice of the Mexican people. Three years later Maximilian was overthrown, captured, and shot by the reform leader, Benito Juárez.

[100] *Memoria del ministro de relaciones interiores y esteriores, D. Luis G. Cuevas, . . . 8 de enero de 1849*, p. 18, from *Colección de memorias de relaciones*, III, Doc. 21.

President Herrera made his final speech to Congress on January 1, 1851. At that time he commented on the success of Mexican foreign policy which had resulted in the most friendly relations with all powers during his term of office. He said that although some nations had sent diplomatic representatives of higher rank than those received from Mexico, this should be attributed not to any lack of consideration on the part of his government but to a lack of funds. Herrera recommended to Congress that a treaty which had been negotiated with Belgium in 1840, but which had not been ratified, be modified and made effective since it possessed certain commercial advantages for Mexico and since "His Majesty, the king of Belgium, has shown the most favorable dispositions toward our Republic."[105] The president pointed out that almost all of the problems of a serious nature concerning foreign relations had been inherited, rather than created, by his administration. These had all been successfully solved or were in the process of solution. This success Herrera largely made possible by setting for his government "an honorable course" which Mexico rigidly followed under his guidance, acting always in good faith. It is doubtful if any preceding Mexican administration received the world-wide approval and support accorded President Herrera from 1848 to 1851.

---

[101] *Leyes y decretos*, 1850–1851, p. 154; Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 210.

[102] *Memoria del ministerio de relaciones . . . enero de 1850*, p. 9, from *Colección de memorias de relaciones*, III, Doc. 22.

[103] The details of relations between the Pope and the Mexican government are discussed in this volume under Religion, Education, and Progressive Development.

[104] *Memoria del ministro de relaciones . . . 8 de enero, 1849*, p. 18, from *Colección de memorias de relaciones*, III, Doc. 21.

[105] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 4–5.

CHAPTER XI

Religion, Education, and General Progress

Much has been written concerning the problems of church and state in Mexico. A large portion of this writing has, unfortunately, been strongly prejudiced on one side or the other. It should be remembered that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the mission was one of the chief instruments for the spread of Spanish power and civilization along vast frontiers. By the nineteenth century, the majority of the clergy had lost this missionary zeal and preferred lives of luxury and privilege in the city convents to the dangers of the frontier. Although the church was largely responsible for what educational and cultural progress had been made in Mexico, its monopolistic control of the educational system had left a dangerously large illiterate population and a people untrained in an understanding of the republican principles upon which the government since independence had been based. More often than not the ideas of the Mexican clergy were in conflict rather than in agreement with the new democratic doctrines. In short, the church, which had been the strong right arm of the Spanish kings, had now become the formidable opponent of the government and an obstacle to its program of national progress.

The spiritual power of the church was uncontested since it was the only religion recognized by the constitution in Mexico. Added to this spiritual domination over the lives of seven million people were the powers of magistrate and financier. A complete system of courts was maintained within the church, and cases affecting the clergy or religious matters were not tried in the civil courts. The wealth of the church was enormous; its properties were evaluated in 1850 at approximately 300,000,000 pesos. Its many sources of wealth from tithes, fees, real estate, loans, etc., were virtually untouched by taxation. It had become the national money lender, and the power of its financial position was enough to overawe any civil government. Concerning this influence of wealth, one author has written:

> A great portion of the church property is in money, and the Archbishop is the great loan and trust company of Mexico. Nor is this power by any means an insignificant one. A bankrupt government is overawed by it. Men of intellect are crushed into silence, and no opposition can successfully stand against the influence of the Church Lord who carries in his hand the treasures of heaven, and in his money bags, the material that moves the world.[1]

---

[1] G. D. Abbot, *Mexico and the United States; Their Mutual Relations and Common Interests*, 93.

This certainly could be said in favor of the church, however, that it had managed its funds much better than had the civil authorities. The clergy also felt that the government's contentions were designed largely to obtain money, and that if the right of the government to levy taxes on the wealth of the church were acknowledged, it would only open the door to wider encroachments. On its part, the federal government objected to the special privileges and powers of the clergy, which constitued a veritable state within the state. An attack by the civil powers against this condition had been launched in 1833 under the leadership of the liberal, Gómez Farías. Laws had been passed to make education free, lay, and compulsory. The *patronato,* or power to appoint clerical officials in the nation, had been taken over by the government. It had also suppressed the collection of tithes and had annulled the civil obligation of monastic oaths. However, the church had quickly marshalled its forces, and, through its political control of the conservative party, sometimes called the church party, had persuaded Santa Anna to reassume the presidency and revoke these liberal decrees. For the next fifteen years, little was done by the government to challenge the entrenched and well-defended position of the church. The reason for this has been expressed by Waddy Thompson in these words:

> . . . no President, however hard pressed (and there is no day in the year that they are not hard pressed), has ever dared to encroach upon that which is regarded consecrated property, with the exception of Gómez Farías, who, in 1834, proposed to the legislative chambers to confiscate all church property, and the measure would, no doubt, have been adopted, but for a revolution which overthrew the administration.[2]

Efforts of the civil authorities, even though they were purely political or economic, to infringe upon the privileges or prerogatives of the church were labeled by the clergy as anti-religious and atheistic. However, when the government brought up the question of "rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," the clergy admitted that it had some obligation.

> The trouble lay in the fact that it insisted on being the judge as to what belonged to Caesar. Having reached a conclusion as to what should be given, it then made a donation and considered its responsibility ended, absolutely refusing to pay taxes.[3]

The struggle in Mexico through the years remained essentially the same, with the civil government attempting, when its strength permitted, to wrest temporal power from the church, leaving only its spiritual and religious influence. A similar struggle was going on in most of the nations of the world. In Mexico, due to the weakened condition of the government, caused by revolutions, it took longer to settle the issue. The conflict was not between religion and democracy, as such, but between the sovereign power of the state and the power of a political and economic organization that threatened the very sovereignty of that state. The bone of contention was political and economic power, not religion.[4]

---

[2] Waddy Thompson, *Recollections of Mexico,* 41.

[3] José María Besares, *Inmunidad de la iglesia,* 9, quoted in Callcott, *Church and State in Mexico,* 212.

The church had emerged from the war with the United States with her wealth and properties virtually untouched. She had reluctantly supported the war effort and any aid that was obtained had been forced from her by the government. In contrast, the government was bankrupt and beset with problems of every description. This was the situation in regard to church and state that confronted Herrera when he assumed the presidency in June, 1848.

José María Jiménez was appointed by Herrera as Minister of Justice and Clerical Affairs. The president, himself, was considered to be a devout Catholic.[5] Like many other moderate liberals who were religious men, he felt, however, that the political, educational, and judicial powers of the church should be limited, and that the clergy should confine their activities to spiritual and religious matters. It was the policy of the Herrera government to move slowly in accomplishing this result. Any sudden or general attack on the temporal power of the church would undoubtedly have brought about the overthrow of the government which was already hard pressed to retain its position. This cautious policy was generally approved, although some of the more radical liberals became impatient for more speedy reforms.

During the second administration of President Herrera, relations with the Vatican were most cordial. This was due to Herrera's personal interest in the welfare of the Pope. Political disturbances in Rome had forced the Pope to leave the Vatican and go to Gaeta in order that he might be able to exercise freely his apostolic powers. On December 4, 1848, Pope Pius IX wrote to President Herrera from Gaeta describing the political difficulties that had caused him to flee from his capital.[6] News of these events in Rome aroused much excitement and sympathy for the Pope in Mexico. Speaking for the nation, President Herrera wrote to Pope Pius IX on February 12, 1849, expressing concern over his misfortunes and inviting him to come to live in Mexico and to make it his new seat of religious government, if he were unable to return to Rome. The letter of Herrera read in part as follows:

---

[4] George I. Sánchez, *Mexico, A Revolution by Education*, 167.
[5] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 266.
[6] *Ibid.*, 266.

> Nothing could be sadder for Mexico than the knowledge that the common Father of the faithful lives in unpleasantness, and that his holy person has been the object of sacrilegious violence in the capital of his own states.[7]

Herrera stated that it was his hope that the Pope would soon return to Rome with full possession of his temporal as well as spiritual powers over the papal states.

> . . . The Catholic nations could not, without alarm and deep feeling, see arise in Rome a power of any kind not subordinate to his Holiness, since such a power would threaten to terminate the independence of the Pontiff, and, according to the course of human events, would sooner or later do so. If such a thing should happen, it would produce the saddest consequences for the Catholic world.[8]

The president concluded by saying that if the Pope "were to honor the New World by his presence, . . . he would find in Mexico seven million faithful souls" awaiting his coming.[9]

This letter was followed by an Act of Congress on March 16 which granted the Pope twenty-five thousand pesos from a badly depleted treasury and directed that prayers be said for a period of three days in all the churches in Mexico for the return of the Pope to Rome.[10] The Pope was duly appreciative of President Herrera's letter and other expressions of Mexican regard and devotion. He wrote to the President on April 20, 1849, and thanked him for these protestations of faith.[11] Pope Piux IX showed his personal appreciation of President Herrera by making him a knight of the Grand Cross of San Gregorio. In addition to actual membership in the order, Herrera received the silver "Grand Cross" set with diamonds, which was to be displayed as a medal on the left side; it was to be worn with the accompanying gold and crimson *banda* which was to be placed over the right shoulder.[12] This consideration was granted, said the Pope,

---

[7] *Ibid.*, 267–268. The letter is quoted in full. It is addressed to "His Holiness the Great Pontiff Pius IX." Mariano Cuevas, *Historia de la nación mexicana*, 652.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] This letter is also given in *Memoria del ministro de justicia*, 1850, pp. 40–41.

[10] Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, V, 541. Decree of March 16, 1849.

[11] The original letter, addressed in Italian and written in Latin, has been photostated and appears on the following page. A translation of the letter into Spanish may be found in Ortega, "Familia Bárcena," 44, in his *Historia genealógica*, III. It reads in part: "Querido hijo, Ilustre y Honorable varón, salud y Apostólica Bendición. Entre tantas angustias como nos afligen, nada ciertamente puede ser más grato para nosotros, que conceder los principales testimonios de nuestra benevolencia, con preferencia á aquellos ilustres varones que, por su insigne fe en la Iglesia, vehementemente pesarosos por nuestra calamidad, se glorían de calmarla con todo cuidado y empeño, y de profesar grande amor, veneración y observancia a nosotros y la Cátedra de Pedro. . . ."

> . . . to distinguish you with special honor and to absolve you in this way of any ecclesiastical censure that may have been fulminated against you in the past.

In a similar manner, Foreign Minister Cuevas and the presidents of the Chambers were also honored.[13] To the nation as a whole, the Pope held out the hope for a Mexican cardinal.

A papal nuncio was received in Mexico City and Señor Valdivieso headed a special mission to Rome to arrange points under discussion between the Mexican government and the Pope.[14] When the Pope returned to Rome in early 1850, thanksgiving masses were ordered in Mexico to commemorate the occasion.[15] On the issue of the *patronato* or clerical appointments, the Mexican government obtained the support of the Vatican, and President Herrera was able to announce that "the Pope has approved those [names] that the government has presented" to fill the various pastoral vacancies.[16] Unfortunately, the leading candidate for the proposed cardinalship, Bishop Portugal of Michoacán, died, and none was appointed during Herrera's term of office. In every respect, Herrera termed Mexico's relations with the Vatican as "harmonious and satisfactory."[17]

Early in Herrera's administration the old question of religious toleration was raised by the two liberal newspapers, *El Arco Iris* and *El Eco del Comercio*. Melchor Ocampo, Guillermo Prieto, and a few members of Congress were the chief advocates of freedom

---

[12] The picture on page 533 shows the silver cross, the sash and the blue velvet box in which they were sent. The box was made in Milan, Italy, and on its top are the initials, J. J. H., in gold letters. The Mexican golden eagle is in the center with four smaller eagles at the corners. The silver cross is no longer set with diamonds. These have been replaced with glass. At the extreme left of the picture is a rosary which was given by the first Marquis de Herrera to the president's father, Don José de Herrera y Campo. The rosary is of fine gold filigree and dates from the sixteenth or seventeenth century. The gold religious locket also belonged to the president's father, and his name appears on the back of it in Italian. These are now in the possession of Diego Ortega, the president's great-grandnephew.

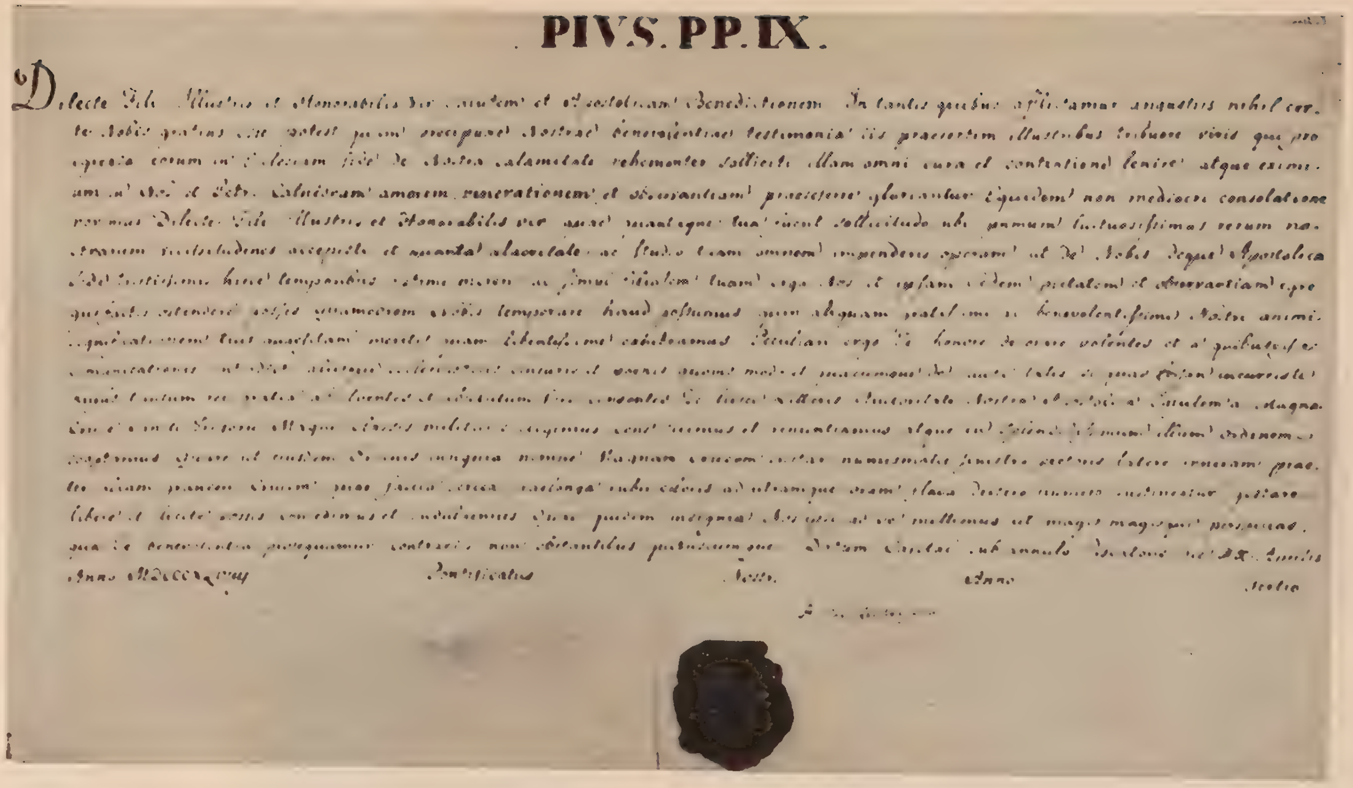
[13] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 163; Bancroft *op. cit.*, V, 590 footnote.

[14] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 21.

[15] By decree of June 8, 1850, in *Leyes y decretos*, 1850–1851, p. 102.

[16] *Discurso . . . por el presidente Herrera . . . , el día 1 de enero de 1851 . . . ,* p. 22.

[17] *Ibid.*, 21–22.



PIVS. PP. IX.

Letter of Pope Pius IX to President José Joaquín de Herrera, April 20, 1849

Banda and Gran Cruz de San Gregorio, with the case in which they were sent by Pope Pius IX to President José Joaquín de Herrera, and religious relics belonging to the Herrera family.

of religion. The idea was advanced that the most progressive and prosperous nations of the world recognized the principle of religious toleration.[18] Ocampo asked the pointed question,

> . . . what a man was to do if he did not obey his own conscience in religious matters; for, if he followed the instructions of another, he would have to

---

[18] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 259–260; Callcott, *op. cit.*, 209.

> change his religion with each country he visited and become a Catholic, Protestant, Jew or Mohammedan as occasion demanded.[19]

The answer given was that the worship of God is not a "right" but an "obligation"; that the church is right in its views, and, if a man's reasoning is correct, he will agree with the church, and there will be no variation or disagreement.[20]

> If the Church was intolerant, it claimed not to persecute anyone; it simply demanded that the country should close its doors to Protestants, as a father would close the doors of his house to those who would injure his children, or as a city would exclude persons with contagious diseases.[21]

The political difficulties which the Pope was experiencing in Italy produced an unfavorable reaction to the idea of toleration in Mexico. A heated press discussion on the issue followed, with *El Universal* leading the clerical and conservative opposition. It was argued that since there were few members of other religious groups in Mexico and since the nation was so predominantly Catholic that recognition of other beliefs would only sow seeds of discord and disunion.[22] The bishops of Sonora and Oaxaca were particularly zealous in opposing toleration, saying that such a move would inspire revolts and was "impolitic, impractical, scandalous and incendiary."[23] President Herrera and Congress were besieged with petitions from clergy, citizens, and state legislatures to uphold the faith and to prevent the passage of any law granting tolerance.

> The executive power, jealous of fulfilling its duty, sent on January 6, [1849] some of these petitions to the Chamber of Deputies. On them were the names of social leaders of both sexes and from all classes of society. Among the petitions was one from Orizaba, signed by 1,200 women.[24]

Another aspect of the question of religious toleration affected plans for settlement and colonization of the frontier. No satisfactory law on colonization was passed because of differences of opinion as to whether there should be restrictions on the colonists concerning their religious beliefs. One group in Congress pointed out that one of the chief blunders in the settlement of Texas had been to allow Protestants to enter that province. Others held that many of the most industrious and desirable European colonists were not Catholics. Riva Palacio made the observation that

---

[19] Melchor Ocampo, *Repuesta primera . . . al señor autor de una impugnación*, 9–10, quoted in Callcott, *op. cit.*, 209.

[20] *Segunda impugnación a la representación del señor Ocampo*, 4; *Carta de un amigo a otro*, 26, quoted in Callcott, *op. cit.*, 209.

[21] *Carta de un amigo a otro*, 12–13, quoted in Callcott, *op. cit.*, 214.

[22] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 259–260.

[23] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 130; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 721. Some opponents said that toleration would allow the Indians to return to their ancient practice of human sacrifice.

[24] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 260. A petition from Guadalajara listed 1,380 signatures. "Representación de los vecinos de Guadalajara" in Callcott, *op. cit.*, 215.

> tolerance is a dogma precticed by the civilized world, and Mexico cannot be intolerant if she wishes to be populated without delay.[25]

He also stated that the contentions of *El Universal* against religious freedom "denied Mexico the right to enter the sphere of the civilized world."[26] Political reaction over the issue was so great that Con-gress made little effort to take up the matter in its sessions in early 1849. The question of tolerance had to be postponed to a later date and suitable laws governing colonization were also delayed for the same reason. Although religious toleration was not granted, members of other religious faiths were not persecuted nor were they forced to accept Catholic beliefs.

As a result of this spirit of reaction, Querétaro passed through its legislature a law for the reëstablishment of the Jesuits and returned to them certain confiscated properties. Some difficulty arose over the issuance of the order. Neither the governor nor the deputy governor would promulgate the decree. After much delay, the order was issued by a minor official.[27] Chihuahua, in an effort to meet the Indian menace, also decreed the reëstablishment of the Jesuit missions at about the same time.[28]

The execution of the priest, Jarauta, for taking part in the revolt of Paredes was criticized by the more ardent clerical-conservatives. *El Universal* again led in this criticism of the government for what it termed undue severity.[29] However, this flurry of excitement did not last for long. Another event during the latter part of 1849 which had religious repercussions was that of the forced resignation of the conservative *ayuntamiento* of the Federal District. It will be remembered from a previous discussion of this episode that Minister of Justice and Clerical Affairs Jiménez resigned his cabinet post in protest against the methods used by Arista in accomplishing this result. President Herrera, in November, appointed as his successor Marcelino Castañeda. Of course, the conservatives, among whom were the majority of the clergy, were sympathetic to the claims of the council as presented by its president, Lucas Alamán. Other than for the resignation of Jiménez, this issue was more political than religious in its nature and its effect.[30]

---

[25] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 721.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Arrangoiz, *op. cit.*, II, 315–316.

[28] *Ibid.*, 296; Calcott, *op. cit.*, 209.

[29] Remarks from *El Universal* quoted in Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 200.

Chief criticisms levied against the church in Mexico during this period were that the clergy had grown lax and lazy, that the higher clergy lived in luxury while the lower clergy were almost destitute; that fees for marriage, baptism, and burial were exorbitant in comparison with the meager earnings of the Indians; and that, outside of the cities, the clergy were too few to care for the spiritual needs of the people.[31] The wealth and splendor of convents, churches, and other ecclesiastical establishments were observed to be in unholy contrast to the misery and poverty of the Indians living nearby. Such a contrast is inadvertently given by Madame Calderón de la Barca, devout Catholic wife of Spain's first minister to Mexico, in her description of the convent of Encarnación which she visited in 1842.

> This convent is in fact a palace . . . each nun has a servant, and some have two . . . the convent is rich; each novice at her entrance pays five thousand dollars into the common stock. There are about thirty nuns and ten novices.[32]

She also speaks of one virgin's blue satin and pearls and another's black velvet and diamonds. The convent had the appearance of a rich women's club in which membership might be purchased for a large sum.

In addition to other funds, the real estate controlled by each convent usually exceeded fifty properties, an average of more than one per nun. The number of properties owned by the ten most prosperous convents in the capital and the number of nuns and servants living in each shortly before the War of Reform were as follows:

Convent	Nuns	Servants	Properties
Encarnación	44	73	79
Concepción	36	79	132
Regina Coeli	30	68	62
San Lorenzo	30	29	60
Jesús María	29	55	83
Balvanera	27	44	63
San Gerónimo	26	42	60
Santa Catalina de Sena	25	33	60
San José de Gracia	22	32	52
Santa Clara	22	30	44[33]

---

[30] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 173; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 731.

[31] Ernest Gruening, *Mexico and Its Heritage*, 193; Callcott, *op. cit.*, 211. Indians were required to pay twenty pesos for a marriage fee in some areas when their annual pay was only about fifty pesos. This was a direct invitation to ignore the ceremony entirely.

[32] Madame Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, Letter 15.

[33] The discrepancy among the brotherhoods between their wealth and the number of priests in each monastery was even more noticeable, thirty-nine

In regard to the wealth and large property holdings of the church, it was the contention of the clergy that these were essential to assure the respect and admiration of the people. Wealth also lent dignity to the church program and insured its continuity. It was claimed, moreover, that ample resources were necessary to gain and hold the support of the leaders of the nation, many of whom were rich men.[34]

In 1850, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada published a statistical report which contained among other items this synopsis of the Mexican hierachy:

Archbishops of Mexico	1
Bishops	2
Prebends	184
Parishes	1,229
Ecclesiastics:	
Regular Monks, bound by monastic vows and rules	1,139
Secular clergy, in parish service	2,084
Convents of Monks	146
Convents of Nuns	59
Colleges for propagating the faith	8
Ecclesiastics inhabiting Convents	1,139
Nuns residing in Convents	1,541
Young girls in Convents	740
Servants in Convents	870
Members of Colleges for propagating the faith	238

Conventual Establishments of the "Regular Orders"

Dominicans	25
Franciscans	68
Augustines	22
Carmelites	16
Mercedarios	19
Total	150[35]

There had been a steady decline in the number of monks and nuns since 1810. In that year there were 3,112 monks of the regular clergy and 2,098 nuns; in 1850, there were 1,139 monks and 1,541 nuns in religious service.[36] As a matter of fact, by counting all the clergy, including the aged and infirm as well as the administrative officers, there was in 1850 only about one for each eighteen hundred inhabitants.[37]

---

of these being inhabited by fewer than five monks. Gruening, *op. cit.*, 194; Ward, *op. cit.*, I, 348.

[34] Callcott, *op. cit.*, 214.

[35] Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, *Grande sinóptico de la república mexicana en 1850*, quoted in Abbot, *op. cit.*, 88–89. This report was approved by the Mexican Society of Geography and Statistics.

[36] Gruening, *op. cit.*, 191; Callcott, *op. cit.*, 213; Abbot, *op. cit.*, 88.

[37] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 368–369.

> The real complaint was that the city districts, where living conditions were good, were fairly well supplied, while country and frontier districts were practically without ecclesiastics of any kind. Some parishes were seventy-five miles in length and contained children of twelve years of age who had never been baptized; yet, according to the Church, baptism was a prerequisite of salvation.[38]

For the most part, the Herrera administration supported the program of the church. President Herrera hoped for a mutually beneficial relationship between church and state. He had a great respect for property rights and made no effort to tax away the wealth of the church or to expropriate its property. Instead, the government actually paid instalments on the loans made by the church during the recent war. Commenting on this phase of the government's relations with the church, Herrera said:

> Throughout my administration the clergy of the republic have suffered no attacks upon their property, which in the name of loans or something else, have been made so frequently. Far from this, in the midst of financial difficulties, large sums have been repaid to the church which were furnished by it in 1846 and 1847.[39]

However, in regard to the political power of the church, Herrera opposed the claim of the clergy to exclusive control of the *patronato* as a denial of the inherent authority and sovereignty of the state. This long-standing struggle for control of the appointment of clerics within the republic and the failure to make appointments during the war years had resulted in a large number of vacancies in the hierarchy. These positions needed to be filled. The answer to the problem was the law of April 16, 1850, which restored the *patronato* to the civil authorities. Governmental approval was required for all clerical appointments within the republic. At least three names were to be submitted by the clergy as candidates for each position. All persons must be native born Mexicans. This was designed to prevent the influx of foreign priests who might or might not be loyal to the government. In selecting one of the three candidates, the federal government was to request the opinion of the state governor concerned.[40]

This act constituted the most significant piece of legislation passed during the Herrera régime against the political influence of the church. Relations with the Vatican were so cordial, thanks to the personal friendship between President Herrera and Pius IX, that the special mission to Rome was able to secure the acquiescence of the Pope in the new law. The basis of the Mexican government's argument was that the power of appointment granted by the Pope to the Spanish kings for driving the Moors out of Spain automatically had passed to the civil authorities when independence had been won from Spain. In promulgating the law of April 16, 1850, President Herrera cautioned that the government and the clergy should exercise thoughtful consideration of each other's position and viewpoint, and he requested that "harmony be preserved between both powers" and that their efforts "be united to promote the happiness of the people."[41]

---

[38] Callcott, *op. cit.*, 213.

[39] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 22.

[40] Dublán and Lozano, *Legislación mexicana*, V, 680; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 750.

Two books published in 1850 and 1851 aroused a flurry of excitement among the clergy. The first was entitled the *Mysteries of the Inquisition* and discussed, among other things, the political advantages of wealth and religion as enjoyed by the conservative party and the misuse of them to gain political control. The clergy protested vigorously the circulation of this book as anti-religious and heretical.[42] In early 1851, a very liberal book, *The Education of Women,* appeared and was promptly condemned by the ecclesiastical authorities as "contrary to religion."[43] Efforts were made by the clergy to enlist the aid of the government in suppressing such books and writings as "impious." In this, they were only partially successful.

Of some interest was the decree of April 23, 1850, in which President Herrera directed that memorial services should be held in all the churches of Mexico on September 28 of each year for Iturbide and other heroes of the wars for independence.[44] During the same year a decree of May 22 requested the religious orders to provide priests to serve the religious needs of the new military colonies along the frontier.[45]

In the realm of education, the church enjoyed an almost complete monopoly. The government controlled only the military college and a half-dozen *colegios* in the Federal District. Nibbling at the educational monopoly of the church, the government passed a law on July 14, 1848, which was an effort to raise educational standards and to establish basic qualifications for teachers in the schools of the capital. Priests who aspired to teach in them were required to take examinations and those who received satisfactory marks were approved by the federal government through the *ayuntamiento* of the Federal District.[46] This was part of the government's moderate program to limit the activities of the church to purely religious and spiritual matters. However, no law was passed which went so far as that enacted during the presidency of Gómez Farías which declared education to be lay, free and obligatory.

---

[41] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 750.

[42] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 204, 206; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 744.

[43] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 230.

[44] *Leyes y decretos,* 1850–1851, p. 66.

[45] *Ibid.*, 93.

By decree of August 5, 1848, Congress set aside certain funds from taxes to be given to the *ayuntamiento* of the capital for educational purposes.[47] Steps were taken to stimulate interest in higher education by granting fellowships for study in literature and science on the college level.[48] President Herrera took an interest in educational progress and in his speech to Congress of November 2, 1848, hinted at the need for "public education." He stated that the schools of the republic were few in number and deficient in quality "for our institutions and our epoch" and added that "the education of our people demands your best efforts."[49] Little noteworthy legislation was forthcoming, however, in response to the president's plea.

During the war, education was disrupted generally. The College of the Purísima Concepción, which had been destroyed during the invasion, was rebuilt during Herrera's administration.[50] In Orizaba, the College of San José de Gracia received financial assistance from the government.[51] Special courses in agriculture were offered in an attempt to improve farming methods. Toward the close of 1849, Congress imposed an excise tax, the proceeds from which were assigned to schools in the Federal District.[52] To give some idea as to the amount of money appropriated to the schools in the Federal District, the following figures are given for the year 1850, in the budget as proposed by the Minister of Finance:

School of Medicine	15,645	pesos
Grants to the *colegios*	36,000	"
College of Mining	36,000	"
Grant to the National University	7,613	"
Colegio de Belén	480	"

---

[46] Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, V, 411–412; *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, pp. 238–240.

[47] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, p. 286.

[48] *Ibid.*, 297–300. This was accomplished by decree of August 11, 1848, which applied only to colleges in the Federal District.

[49] "El general José Joaquín de Herrera, al cerrar las sesiones del congreso, en la capital del país, el 2 de noviembre de 1848," given in *Informes y manifiestos*, I, 1848, p. 355.

[50] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 175.

[51] *Ibid.*, 182.

[52] *Ibid.*, 178.

Primary instruction	8,000 "
Military College	92,000 "
Academy of San Carlos	26,120 "
Total	221,858 pesos[53]

This was a rather large sum considering the depleted state of the treasury. It will be noted that the Military College received almost half of the amount requested. Since mining was one of the foremost industries of the nation, courses in the latest mining methods were taught in the College of Mining under government supervision. The curriculum of the Military College was completely reorganized with special emphasis on tactics, gunnery, and physical education.

Although lack of funds and clerical monopoly were retarding factors, there was a general revival of interest in educational and cultural development. The new State of Guerrero declared itself to be the "Protector of the Sciences and Arts." The idea of higher education for women was presented in the book, *Education of Women,* and attracted, as previously mentioned, quite some interest among the liberals. This progressive trend was opposed by the clergy as too liberal, radical, and even dangerous. In an effort to provide additional opportunities for advanced study in science, the cultural arts, and military practices, the Herrera government established scholarships for three years of training in European universities for outstanding students. This law was passed in September, 1850, and stipulated that examinations would be given to determine the winners of the awards. Recipients of these scholarships were to receive five hundred pesos a year for living expenses, and travel was also to be paid by the federal government. There was a somewhat unequal distribution of these grants, however, since four went to students from the Military College, two to the College of Mining, and one each to the other *colegios* in the Federal District.[54] This was a most commendable program; however, it indicated that Mexico still looked to Europe, and more particularly France, as the cultural center of the world.

In speaking to Congress in early 1851, President Herrera stated that he had done everything he could within the scope of the government's power to foster education. All possible aid, he said, had been given the schools of the Federal District, which were the only ones over which the government had a direct influence. Herrera added that the establishment of secondary instruction had also been the "object of preferential action." The progress of youth had been stimulated, he said, in whatever ways it had been possible and several young men already had been sent to Europe to complete their education. He concluded by saying that he felt sure Congress and the people would approve what had been done with the limited resources available.[55]

---

[53] *Esposición del ministro de hacienda,* 1850, pp. 64–65.

[54] *Leyes y decretos,* 1850–1851, p. 127.

During the administration of President Herrera, art, science, and literature began to flourish to a degree hitherto unparalled. This was accomplished under the leadership of poets, dramatists, and thinkers like Pesado, Carpio, the Lacunzas, Ferrer, Tagle, Navarro, Pacheco, Galván, and Calderón. Among the younger literary men Prieto, Alcaraz, Payno, Escalante, Ortíz, Ramírez, Castillo, Lafragua, Zarco, and the Segura brothers were outstanding.[56] These authors published their works separately and in *El Museo Mexicano, El Liceo, El Ateneo, El Recreo de las Familias,* and in various weekly publications edited by Ignacio Cumplido. Not all of the eminent writers were located in the Mexican capital. In the area of Puebla and Vera Cruz, such talented young men as Roa and Bárcena y Mirón were found. In the state of Guadalajara, Villaseñor, Vigil, Cruz, Aeda, Tovar, and Gallardo became famous under the protection of the local governor, José Portillo.[57] In the field of medicine, much progress had also been made. Doctors who had studied in Europe brought back the latest knowledge of medical techniques and practices. During Herrera's presidency, the College of Medicine received a new building which was badly needed and which had been provided for by law for many years but had not been constructed.[58]

During Herrera's second term of office, the people at large became intent mainly on rest and recuperation. The period of comparative peace which followed the war with the United States brought a gratifying revival of prosperity and development. In April, 1848, mail and stagecoach service was reëstablished between Vera Cruz and Mexico City. One of the first acts of President Herrera was to order the Department of Public Health to give the capital a thorough cleaning.[59] Similar action was taken by other cities throughout the republic. In an effort to improve public health and sanitation, the decree of February 7, 1849, was passed, providing for a special council to inspect public places and to enforce minimum requirements of cleanlinesss.[60] Congress proposed a measure to improve health conditions in pestilential Vera Cruz by bringing water from the Jamapa River to that city.[61] In May, 1850, President Herrera signed a bill providing for the appointment of a special commission, made up of outstanding medical and public health authorities, to study scientifically the recent cholera epidemic with a view to preventing its recurrence.[62]

---

[55] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 9.

[56] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 340–341; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 593.

[57] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 341.

[58] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 8.

[59] *El Siglo XIX*, June 10, 1848.

Mining was the most profitable industry of the republic and was referred to by Herrera as the "first industry of our soil."[63] He reported to Congress that during the year 1850 the production of the mines was valued at almost thirty million pesos.[64] New discoveries of gold and quicksilver in Lower California were most opportune. The mine of San José de los Muchachos in Guanajuato, which was discovered during Herrera's presidency, proved to be the richest deposit found since colonial days.[65] Improved mining methods and the low cost of production gave Mexico an advantage in the mineral market.

Evidence of growing prosperity was shown in the first display of industrial and agricultural products held November 1, 1849, under the direction of the municipal authorities of Mexico City. This exposition was imitative of European efforts and consisted largely of flowers, fruits, vegetables, architecture, painting, engraving, sculpture, and certain classes of plastic arts. It attracted widespread attention and proved highly beneficial and successful.[66] In addition to the special courses offered in agriculture, many agricultural societies were formed throughout the nation, similar to the granges later organized in the United States. These and the fairs of San Juan de los Lagos brought improvement and stimulation in that industry. Sugar and cotton came to be exported in increasing amounts.[67] President Herrera applauded the spirit of enterprise that had been awakened but added that much remained to be accomplished to overcome the stagnant condition which had previously existed.[68]

---

[60] *Leyes y decretos*, 1849, p. 94.

[61] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 133.

[62] *Leyes y decretos*, 1850–1851, p. 92. Decree of May 20, 1850.

[63] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el dia 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso,* 10.

[64] *Ibid.*

[65] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 733.

[66] Arrangoiz, *op. cit.*, II, 300; Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 172; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 593.

[67] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el dia 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso,* 9.

The Minister of Internal and Foreign Relations made an effort to increase the consumption of cotton goods within the republic. In his report to Congress in January, 1850, he stated that there were more than sixty cotton factories in Mexico.[69] He reported also that glass and fine porcelain factories had recently been built by Srs. Laurent and Company and that a paper manufacturing plant was in operation in the State of Mexico.[70] Beautiful new buildings were constructed in almost all of the cities and home comforts were multiplied.[71] The government decided to build a new mint in Hermosillo and a new municipal hospital was erected in the Federal District.[72] A law of October 2, 1848, provided for the establishment of additional hospital facilities and the improvement of prisons and insane asylums.[73] A few days later a decree directed the construction of the first penitentiary in the Federal District, to consist of six hundred cells. The building was to be so constructed that the proper amount of light and ventilation would be provided, that Mass could be held for all prisoners, and that, although assuring the safekeeping of the inmates, it could not be converted into a fortress.[74] New factories also appeared in Querétaro and Cocolapán, built by Cayetano Rubio and Manuel Escandón, respectively.[75]

In the field of science and invention, signs of progress were in evidence. In 1849, the Herrera government granted Santiago Baggally the right to introduce kerosene lamps into Mexico and the privilege to light cities by that method.[76] Juan de la Granja was given the exclusive privilege of establishing electric telegraph lines within the republic, provided that he completed a line between Mexico City and Vera Cruz during the next two years. The first message was sent on November 13, 1850, between the National Palace and the College of Mining.[77] By early 1851, wires were stretched between Puebla and the capital. Experiments were conducted by Pedro Terreros with a type of electric light. Riva Palacio says that Terreros was successful in "being the first to make the light shine in his country" on November 2, 1850.[78] Ramón Rivera obtained concessions to smelt copper during the latter part of 1849. Ciriaco Villegas took out a patent on a machine to cut marble the following year.[79] The Herrera government adopted the metric system in 1848 when such a measure was proposed by Melchor Ocampo in the Senate.[80] By decree of July 31, 1850, the government was authorized to purchase additional scientific equipment to be used in the national observatories.[81] The Mexican Geographical and Statistical Society and other scientific organizations were very active and contributed much valuable information during Herrera's second administration.

---

[68] *Ibid.*

[69] "Memoria del Ministerio de Relaciones Interiores y Esteriores, leída al congreso general en enero de 1850," p. 24, from *Colección de Memorias*, III, Doc. 22.

[70] *Ibid.;* Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 142. Woolens, linen, and dyeing industries also showed gains.

[71] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 593.

[72] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 188, 119.

[73] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, pp. 438–440.

[74] *Ibid.*, 1848, pp. 446–449. Decree of October 8, 1848.

[75] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 183.

[76] *Ibid.*, 142. Francisco Arbeu and Pedro Green obtained the exclusive privilege to light with gas.

[77] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 744–745; Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, V, 556.

Domestic and foreign commerce were advanced by the construction of roads, railroads, and the organization of export companies and steamship lines. New roads were built from Vera Cruz to the capital and were extended to connect with Tampico and San Blas on the west coast. Other highways connected San Blas with Guadalajara and Tepic, San Blas with Querétaro, and the capital with Tehuacán.[82] It was even suggested that the roads leading out of the capital to the various ports be federalized and tolls charged for their use. The revenue would then be used for highway upkeep and repair. However, this measure failed to pass. On May 18, 1849, the Herrera government granted a railroad company the right to build a line from Vera Cruz to Mexico and then on to some Pacific port. The law provided that the project had to begin within two years and be completed within fifteen for the franchise to remain valid.[83] On September 15, 1850, a section of this railroad was opened from Vera Cruz to San Juan. President Herrera and the Governor of Vera Cruz were selected as sponsors for the christening. There was quite an elaborate ceremony, with many speeches by the dignitaries present, including the president. The celebration continued all the following day, which was the national independence holiday. Herrera and other officials took a short ride on the train in a beautiful coach especially prepared and decorated for the occasion. The festivities were concluded by a gala ball on the night of the sixteenth.[84] It was later decided to extend this line to Acapulco. Needless to say, these roads and railroads were a stimulus to agriculture, industry, and domestic commerce in a country where adequate means of transportation and communication were at a premium.

---

[78] Riva Palacio, *op. cit.*, IV, 745. This was not an incandescent lamp and much remained to be done before a practical and useful means of electric lighting was developed.

[79] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 173, 189.

[80] *Ibid.*, 107.

[81] *Leyes y decretos*, 1850–1851, p. 118. The decree also provided for the care and maintenance of the equipment.

[82] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 109, 119, 157; "Memoria del Ministerio de Relaciones Interiores y Esteriores, leída al congreso general en enero de 1850," p. 19, from *Colección de memorias*, III, Doc. 22.

[83] Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, V, 563.

In January, 1849, Guillermo Drusina and Company was authorized by Congress to operate a steamship line between Panama and Alta California. These packets were to put in at Acapulco, San Blas, and Mazatlán, on the Mexican west coast. A number of export firms were established and commercial agreements entered into which raised exports for 1849 to more than fifteen million pesos.[85]

This was at least a beginning in foreign trade, but Mexico was somewhat handicapped by not having a merchant marine of her own. At the close of his administration, President Herrera observed that "commerce and industry had flourished in the shadow of peace." He stated approvingly that more had been produced, more had been exported, and more Mexican products had been consumed by domestic commerce from 1848 to 1851 than at any time since independence. "Unless some new misfortune befalls us," he said, "this progressive development will continue in all its phases."[86]

The government's liberal policy in regard to freedom of the press already has been indicated. Freedom of literary expression was allowed with certain needful restrictions. In connection with this law, it is of interest to mention the case of the newspaper, *El Tio Nonilla*, which made its appearance in August, 1849. The avowed purpose of this gossip sheet was "to concern itself with private life and to discredit the whole world."[87] After several violations of the press law, the editor of the paper, Joaquín Jiménez, was exiled by President Herrera.[88] As to foreign correspondents, they were allowed greater freedom of action, which included the right to cross the country in gathering information and to report more fully their observations to foreign newspapers.

From the legal standpoint, as previously pointed out, Congress briefly considered abolishing the death penalty, but consideration of that progressive idea was abandoned, due to the revolts of Paredes, Jarauta, and Márquez. Steps were taken to reorganize the legal system and to reclassify and codify the laws for the sake of clarity and to eliminate confusion and contradiction. In addition, Congress passed a law to allow lawyers born in Spain the right to practice in Mexican courts.[89] Another advance was made in October, 1850, when a new law review was published. This magazine was designed to assist the lawyers to keep informed of the latest legal developments and judicial decisions.

---

[84] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 209.

[85] *Ibid.*, 183; for the law granting rights to Drusina and Company, see Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, V, 525.

[86] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 9.

[87] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 168–169.

[88] *Ibid.*, 175.

During Herrera's term of office there were a number of miscellaneous developments that indicated the progressive spirit of the times. An unusual sign of progress was the abolition of bull fighting in the Federal District and in other cities. Bull fights, says Rivera Cambas, were replaced by little theaters where people found pleasing and instructive recreation.[90] Another measure was the taking of a census which it was hoped would be completed by 1851. Thereafter a census was to be taken every ten years. The population in 1850 was estimated at approximately eight and one-half millions. A sort of national chamber of commerce was established, known as the *junta mercantil de fomento,* and Congress considered proposals in 1850 for setting up a new cabinet post for *fomento* to handle such problems as agriculture, industry, commerce, mining, colonization, and communication. This measure was later adopted in 1852.

In conclusion it might be said that under Herrera economic progress and material prosperity were limited only by the meager financial resources available to the government. The period following the war was one of reconstruction and development without compare in the history of the republic. Not only had national well-being been promoted but the lot of the average man had greatly improved. By the end of the first year of Herrera's second administration, "the hope of better days had begun to light the minds of the working classes."[91] Herrera's own honest and unselfish leadership played no small part in the advancement made.

> When we consider the exceptionally trying circumstances under which he was called to power, attempting to bring order out of chaos with insufficient means and against harassing opposition, his administration ranks among the most acceptable, judging by the reforms introduced and the prosperity unfolded, even though several of the leading tasks of reorganization remained unaccomplished.[92]

---

[89] *Ibid.*, 173, 188.

[90] *Ibid.*, 183.

[91] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 130.

[92] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 595

CHAPTER XII

Military Reform and Colonization

At the close of the war, the Mexican army was in decidedly ill repute with the civilian population. The events of the war had emphasized the army's inefficiency, its enormous cost, the pompous assumption of many of its leaders, and its readiness to revolt. During the last days of the struggle, insubordination and desertions increased tremendously. The deserters ravaged the countryside and committed crimes of every description, making life and travel in outlying areas most hazardous.[1] The army of 1848 was a poor contrast to the well-trained troops who had taken Mexico City in 1821. In those days, its officers had been educated in the Spanish military colleges, and promotions were slow but merited. With the introduction of the *pronunciamiento* and *cuartelazo,* merit actually became an obstacle to success. The army became the pawn of political factions. Those who intrigued or adhered to a successful revolt against the government were often promoted from sergeant to captain or even colonel or general. Insubordination brought reward more often than punishment. A general demoralization of the army, which was encouraged by the depleted condition of the treasury, was the result. For long periods of time, officers and men went without pay. This usually resulted in embezzlement of military funds by the officers or in attempts to overthrow the existing government in an effort to control what money remained in the treasury.

The method of obtaining an army was not conducive to loyalty or discipline. Troops were raised by impressing peasants rather than by voluntary enlistment. It was therefore necessary to force them into battle and to guard them to prevent escape.[2] Democracy had no place in the army where a rigid caste system was observed. The social gulf between private and officer was infinite, and there were notorious differences in pay, quarters, food, and clothing. One Mexican writer, José María Mora, has described the lot of the private as follows:

> The private shared in no spoils. Tattered, ill fed, kicked, and buffeted about by drunken and sober officers, his chief ambition was to desert and to return to the family from which he had been dragged by the iniquitous levy.[3]

---

[1] Gruening, *op. cit.,* 297; Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 566.

[2] Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 567.

[3] José María Luis Mora, *Méjico y sus revoluciones,* I, 415–416.

The Indian preferred his own wretched hovel to serving as cannon fodder for the barrack warfare in which

> he had neither interest nor stake and for which he rarely received pay—his normal stipend being generally embezzled by his commanders.[4]

On the other hand, says Francisco Bulnes:

> . . . it was the officer clique, "educated," privileged by law, gorgeously uniformed, and prating of its *honor y dignidad,* which, sworn to defend the nation, instead assaulted, raped, robbed and befouled it.[5]

Santa Anna's introduction of the *pronunciamiento* in 1822, as a means of effecting a change in government, had brought Mexico twenty-five years of unrest and instability. With this convenient weapon at its disposal, the army had shown little inclination to respect the law or to obey the civil authorities to which it was supposedly subordinate. Francisco Bulnes has described the vicious cycle of the pronouncement in this manner:

> After the *pronunciamiento,* the *caudillo* president offered promotions, more money, more impunity, and more treasure, so that the other leaders would not pronounce [against him]. These commanders remained faithful, united to "combat the hydra of revolution," but when it was no longer possible to exploit the chieftain president because they had drained him, they would desert to the "hydra" and declare their recent benefactor a traitor to the country.[6]

Such a pronouncement by Paredes, supported by the false pride of the army, had overthrown President Herrera in 1845 and had forced Mexico into a war with the United States for which Mexico was unprepared. The Mexican people then had seen the army fail in its only legitimate mission, the defense of the nation from foreign invasion. When the full state of military demoralization was revealed, bitter criticism of the army was heard from all quarters. Civilians objected to special privileges and consideration for the military. A system of society that elevated the soldier above the average citizen was opposed. It was pointed out that the people, who paid for the army's support, did not receive the benefit of its services. All too often, the official in charge used his troops to further his own purpose. Also protested was the fact that an armed small per cent of the population ordinarily held the nation in subjugation, dictated its laws, and controlled its government by force. Feeling against the army ran so high in early 1848 that there was occasional street fighting between soldiers and civilians in Vera Cruz and other cities.[7]

---

[4] *Ibid.*, 419, 435–436.

[5] Statement by Bulnes quoted in Gruening, *op. cit.*, 297.

[6] Francisco Bulnes, *The Whole Truth about Mexico,* 204–210.

[7] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 107.

When Herrera became president in June, 1848, he determined upon a policy of complete army reorganization. General Herrera had spent forty years in the military service and was in a position to know its deficiencies and the remedial action that should be taken. As Minister of War he had previously advocated extensive army reform, and, as president, he was able to extend and amplify further his program. Possibly the most beneficial contribution of the Herrera administration to the national welfare was in this field. It was all the more unusual since it was initiated by a president who held the rank of general of division.

Only a few weeks after President Herrera had taken office, Nathan Clifford, United States Minister to Mexico, wrote to Secretary of State Buchanan praising the new president's course of action in regard to the army.

> One of the first acts of the present administration was the patriotic one of striking a blow at the army, which has ever been the curse of the land, but which is still potent for mischief, and has been generally exasperated by the curtailment of its privileges. It is hoped, however, that the presence of the National Guard and the universal execration of Paredes, may keep it in controul [*sic*].[8]

On June 11, 1848, President Herrera appointed General Mariano Arista as the new Minister of War and Marine.[9] Arista, who possessed a very forceful personality, proved to be an excellent choice for carrying out the president's plan. He put the provisions of the new laws into effect without hesitation and showed commendable energy in putting down the revolts of Paredes, Jarauta, and Márquez, as well as Indian uprisings in various parts of the republic.

Some writers have indicated that the other members of the cabinet and President Herrera were dominated by Arista. It should be noted, however, that the plan for the reorganization of the army was drawn up by the president personally. The provisions of this rather lengthy and complete proposal were later enacted into law and implemented by Arista as Minister of War. This plan, Herrera stated, had been in the process of formation since 1838, based upon the experience and information which he had gained since that date.[10]

The problem of military protection for the northern frontier was not covered in the project, but a *junta* of military specialists in border warfare was appointed by the president to consider the best means of dealing with the situation. Herrera proposed a military council to handle instruction and discipline of the army. He also suggested certain qualifications as prerequisites to appointment to the general staff in an effort to improve the quality of officers serving in that important capacity. The plan gave a detailed analysis of the number of troops needed, cost of maintenance, equipment, a merit system of promotion, pay, leaves, pensions, punishments, rules of conduct, health, sanitation, physical fitness, dress, and a number of other items.[11]

---

[8] Letter of Nathan Clifford to James Buchanan, June 26, 1848, quoted in the *Justin H. Smith Papers*, Vol. 6, pp. 304–307.

[9] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 58, p. 161; *El Siglo XIX*, June 11, 1848.

[10] "Proyecto del estatuto del ejército mexicano, por el ciudadano José Joaquín de Herrera, 1848," p. 3, in *Ejército de México*, II, 1848–1882, Doc. 1.

Two noteworthy suggestions were made by Herrera in his project which were designed to promote loyalty to the federal government. One was the proposal that a regular paymaster be assigned to each army unit, and the government was to do its part to see that funds were available. Pay was also to be raised. The other involved the necessity of bringing "the military laws into harmony with the constitution and general laws of the nation."[12]

Herrera said that he hoped those who read his proposal on reorganization, particularly members of the army, would overlook its defects, "considering only the good intentions that have guided me in seeking to promote the best interests of the nation."[13] Herrera also appointed a military commission, with General Manuel Andrade as president, to make a further study of army reorganization with the purpose of making additions or modifications to his original plan. This commission made its report on April 11, 1849, which, in summary, stated that the plan of President Herrera was "in every way judged to be useful and beneficial to the army and to the national cause."[14] Since the commission had been requested to revise the old plan rather than draw up a new one, only slight changes were recommended. The commission implied that it was rather difficult to criticize the president's plan, since he had had such a long experience in military affairs. It was hinted, however, that possibly the reduction in the size of the army and the limitation of the number of officers was somewhat drastic. It was added that perhaps this was necessary in view of the depleted condition of the treasury.

In the meantime, Congress passed a number of laws relating to military matters that needed immediate attention. On June 28,

---

[11] *Ibid.*, 1–56. Appendices A, B, and C.

[12] *Ibid.*, 13–19.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[14] "Dictamen de la junta de señores generales nombrada por el supreme gobierno para informar sobre el arreglo del ejército," p. 115, in *Ejército de México*, II, 1848–1882, Doc. 6.

1848, a law was enacted that provided pensions for widows and orphans of those who had died in battle.[15] A decree of July 3 listed rules and regulations regarding military courtesy and discipline and the relations to be observed between the military and civilian population.[16]

A law of July 4 required commandants-general to give a rigid account of all expenditures to prevent loss and misappropriation of funds.[17] By decree of July 6, the army was to aid in the apprehension of thieves and highwaymen, and speedy trials were to be held.[18] In an effort to save money, and because a navy was virtually non-existent, the departments of marine for north and south were discontinued. By decree of August 10, the functions of these departments were taken over by the commandants of the coastal areas concerned.[19] On August 19, a law was passed to initiate the repatriation of Mexicans in the ceded territories. These Mexicans were to be moved across the boundary at government expense and used as military colonists along the northern frontier of Mexico.[20] The law of July 19 provided for the establishment of military colonies and presidios along the border; however, quite some difficulty was experienced in carrying the law into effect.[21] Other laws were passed concerning desertion and the expediting of military justice.[22]

President Herrera had for a long time advocated a strong National Guard as preferable to a large standing army. Such an organization was created by the law of July 15, 1848. The purpose of the National Guard was stated in the law as follows:

> The National Guard is established to defend the independence of the nation, to sustain its institutions, maintain public tranquility, to enforce the laws, and to uphold the authorities established by them.[23]

Men over eighteen years of age were eligible for the draft. Those who failed to report for service when ordered to do so were subject to a fine of one to two hundred pesos, or imprisonment from two to thirty days. Exempt from service in the National Guard were those who belonged to the regular army or navy, federal and state officials, doctors, surgeons, pharmacists, men over fifty-five, domestic servants, the police, and those who had chronic illnesses.

---

[15] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 69, pp. 186–187.
[16] *Ibid.*, Doc. 75, pp. 202–204.
[17] *Ibid.*, Doc. 79, pp. 208–210.
[18] *Ibid.*, Doc. 83, pp. 213–227.
[19] *Ibid.*, Doc. 114, pp. 293–294.
[20] *Ibid.*, Doc. 123, pp. 307–314.
[21] *Ibid.*, Doc. 95, pp. 264–265.
[22] *Ibid.*, Doc. 108, p. 289, Doc. 96, pp. 272–273.
[23] "Ley orgánica de la guardia nacional, 1848," p. 4, in *Ejército de México*, II, 1848–1882, Doc. 3; *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 90, pp. 242–261.

The guard was divided into mobile and local militia. The mobile guard was formed on the basis of six per thousand population, and it could be sent beyond the borders of its home state or province for a period of six months. The local militia was composed of all men who were physically fit between the ages of eighteen and fifty-five. These men served only within the limits of their states. When actually in the field, the pay of the guard was the same as that of the army. It enjoyed the same rights of promotion, pensions, and honors as the regulars, but the guard was in no way considered a part of the army, nor was it under its orders. Since the militia could choose its own officers, enlistment in this organization was preferable to the regular service. The governor of each state was in command of the militia of his state. The president commanded the militia of the Federal District and the territories. If the federal government needed to borrow the troops of some state, their salaries were paid by the national government while they were on federal service. Otherwise, they were paid by the states. Although discipline was somewhat less rigid, the militia was given the same type of training in tactics, gunnery, and the like as was the army. The guard was also divided into infantry, cavalry, and artillery units.[24]

On several occasions during the course of Herrera's administration, the federal government called upon the militia to aid the regular troops in putting down Indian revolts. The militia gave a good account of itself, showing a fine spirit of coöperation and loyalty.[25] Herrera was highly pleased with its performance and stated that "its valor and discipline have been second to none, and that the faithfulness of that body has been completely proved."[26]

By February, 1849, the mobile militia of all the states totalled 24,973 men.[27] With the states paying the greater part of the cost, this proved to be a very economical arrangement for the national government. By an additional law of September 17, 1849, thirty-four new mobile companies were organized to defend the frontier. The troops were to be armed and mounted by the states, although paid by the federal government. Approximately 1,900 men were raised for this purpose to be distributed among the seven northern frontier states. Coahuila received three hundred men, Durango got four hundred, and the other states shared the remainder equally.[28] The mobile militia also received a new name, now being referred to as the Federal Reserve Army. Needless to say, the mobile units found it a difficult task to give protection to the people along the border. Very rarely could the Indians be drawn into a decisive battle. Instead, they would disappear while the troops were in the area and then return again to renew their depredations when the troops had gone.

---

[24] "Ley orgánica de la guardia nacional, 1848," pp. 1–17, in *Ejército de México*, II, 1848–1882, Doc. 3.

[25] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 12–13.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 572.

Another measure of significance was that of July 20, 1848, which established a *guardia de policía* to protect the lives and property of the inhabitants of the Federal District.[29] It was also its duty to protect travellers from highwaymen and to have charge of the prisons and criminals in the capital. This body was composed of a thousand men and operated under a military type of organization. Membership was voluntary, and the first chief was appointed by the governor of the Federal District, Juan María Flores, with the approval of President Herrera. Salaries ranged from eighteen pesos for the lowest grades to one hundred and twenty pesos a month for the chief. The police guard was to be entirely under the orders of the civilian authorities. Similar groups, of approximately two hundred men each, were to be established in the various states. The police had its own distinctive uniforms and was an organization similar to Díaz' *rurales* of a later date, though possibly not so effective. Qualifications included "robust health, agility, and a height of at least five feet."[30] Efforts were made to stamp out vagrancy and juvenile delinquency. At the close of his administration, Herrera praised the work of the *guardia de policía* by saying that crime had been reduced to a minimum and public safety had been greatly improved during the previous two years.[31]

The most significant piece of military legislation during Herrera's administration was the law of November 4, 1848, which put into effect most of the provisions of Herrera's plan of army reorganization. An army of ten thousand men, the smallest in the nation's independent history, was to be organized. It was to be composed of six thousand infantry, eighteen hundred artillerymen, eighteen hundred cavalry, and four hundred sappers.[32] A revolutionary plan of voluntary enlistment was to be tried. Troops were to be raised by the states on a quota basis. The ratio was approximately one soldier for every sixty thousand inhabitants. Men between the ages of eighteen and fifty-five could be enrolled, as long as there were no near relatives dependent upon them. A bonus of ten pesos was paid for enlisting. Pay was slightly increased and uniforms furnished. Privates in the infantry received fifteen pesos a month, cavalry sixteen, and artillerymen and sappers seventeen. Sergeants in these branches got twenty-six, twenty-nine, and thirty pesos per month, respectively. The pay scale increased proportionately with rank, with generals of brigade receiving three hundred and thirty-three pesos and generals of division, four hundred and seventeen pesos monthly.[33]

---

[28] *Leyes y decretos*, 1849, p. 74.

[29] Reglamente de la guardia de policía del distrito," in *Ejército de México*, II, 1848–1882, Doc. 4; *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 97, pp. 273–275.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 20.

The abolition of the forced levies was applauded as a truly republican step. Quotas of the states ranged from 2,231 for Mexico, Tlascala, and the Federal District to 104 for Tabasco. The states, however, were able to raise but slightly more than half their quotas. Enlistments were curtailed somewhat, owing to the fact that Congress failed to include a provision to allow enlisted men to rise through merit from the ranks to hold commissions, although this measure had been favored by both Arista and Herrera. By the end of 1850, there were 6,426 men in the army, or about two-thirds its proposed complement. In spite of this small number, President Herrera was pleased with the improved quality of the troops. He stated:

> . . . these are loyal soldiers, of which the greater part are found, not in the cities living lives of luxury, but in places necessary to the defense of the republic.[34]

The law of November 4 also provided for the building of a home for wounded war veterans at an estimated cost of six hundred and forty thousand pesos. In order to reduce the number of officers to the required figure, many were given leave and others were retired. This problem was made easier because of the fact that many officers had retired voluntarily at the close of the war in 1848. Another article of the law assessed more severe punishment upon those still classified as deserters after the promulgation of the decree. Those who had been honorably discharged from service were to receive discharge certificates so that they would not be mistaken for deserters.

---

[32] "Ley de 4 de noviembre de 1848 sobre arreglo del ejército," 4–5, in *Ejército de México*, II, 1848–1882, Doc. 2.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 12.

President Herrera's administration had been in power only seven months when Minister of War Arista made his first annual report to Congress. He stated that the army had been successful in putting down the revolt of Paredes and gave particular praise to General Bustamante as commander of the government troops. The loyalty of the National Guard of the Federal District and Governor Flores was also applauded. Arista mentioned the revolt of Quiros in the Sierra Gorda but stated that this had failed, largely because the states of Querétaro, San Luis, and Guanajuato had formed an alliance against him.[35] He informed Congress that two thousand rifles had been procured in the United States and sent to Yucatán where the condition of the whites was much improved.

Acting on rumors that an attempt might be made to set up an independent republic of the Sierra Madre, Arista said that the government had taken the necessary measures to prevent such an attempt. General Miñón was sent to the frontier with two thousand troops to keep an eye on any secessionist development and on raiding Indian parties. The Minister promised that four thousand additional militia would be sent if the situation warranted such a move. For frontier defense, Arista urged the establishment of presidios and presidial companies of the type used in Spanish colonial days. This, he said, seemed to be one of the most effective means of defense against the Indians. He added that three thousand rifles and nine hundred carbines had been ordered for use on the frontier. Forty-six thousand pesos, he stated, had been set aside for buying horses and equipment for the mobile militia, but that this was insufficient to do all the things that needed to be done. He requested Congress to appropriate two million pesos for the purpose of erecting four well-fortified forts along the new border; however, the distressed condition of the treasury prevented Congress from acting favorably on this recommendation. He proposed a budget of 7,685,732 pesos, which, although representing half of the total government expenditure, was much smaller than it had been in many years.[36]

Arista stated that the administration intended to reopen the military college at Chapultepec and to broaden its curriculum. He suggested that higher pay be provided for members of the medical corps to attract the necessary number of doctors and surgeons to care for the needs of the army. The Minister also called for a closer coöperation between commandants-general and state governors in seeing that the laws and the constitution were faithfully observed. "In vain we call ourselves republicans," he said, "if force is the only method whereby legal processes can be carried out."[37] In the same vein, he said "the army should be made the positive guarantee of freedom, not a threat to it."

---

[35] "Memoria del secretario de estado y del despacho de guerra y marina, leída en la cámara de diputados el día 9 de enero de 1849," 5–8, from *Memorias de guerra y marina*, III, Doc. 32.

[36] *Ibid.*, 24.

Arista's report on the condition of the navy was very brief. Practically all the ships of the Mexican navy had been captured by the forces of the United States. The only ship of any consequence that remained was the schooner *Vera Cruz,* renamed *Fortuna,* which was sent to Campeche to be armed.[38] With nothing to do, most of the naval forces had been given shore duty or leave. Construction was ordered, however, on a steamer, five gunboats, and four launches which were to be used to protect the ports and prevent smuggling. He reported that during the preceding year the ports of Matamoros, Tampico, Vera Cruz, Tabasco, Campeche, Sisal and Carmen had been opened on the Gulf of Mexico and Guaymas, Mazatlán, San Blas, Manzanillo, and Acapulco were engaging in commerce on the Pacific.

In January, 1850, Arista again addressed Congress on the condition of the army and navy and the progress of the military reform program. He summarized the success of the army during the preceding year in putting down the revolt of Márquez and various Indian uprisings. Arista stated that a number of rifles and swords had been purchased from France to be used by the Mexican army.[39] He said that the government had pushed forward its military reform program in spite of some expected opposition. "There are always some," he stated, "who call those who try to regulate the army, or to eliminate abuses within it, enemies of the army."[40] However, the administration had displayed a firm will and patriotic decision in carrying through its plan to make the army "the servant of the people rather than their master." An effort had been made to substitute "wisdom and honor for ignorance and revolutionary rashness." Arista said that he felt that the events of 1849 presented "clear and undeniable proof that the majority of the Mexican people favor the federal system." This he attributed to a gradual realization that the constitution was the safeguard of the nation and to the fact that the people were no longer interested in exchanging positive benefits under the constitution for impractical theories of revolutionists.[41]

---

[37] *Ibid.*, 18–19.

[38] *Ibid.*, 25–26.

[39] "Memoria del secretario de estado y del despacho de guerra y marina, leída en la cámara de diputados el 26 de enero, 1850," p. 16, from *Memorias de guerra y marina,* III, Doc. 33.

[40] *Ibid.*, 19.

Very little space was given to the navy in Arista's report. Congress had failed to act on his recommendations for the navy of the previous year. The Minister, therefore, contented himself by saying that he hoped that his original requests would now receive favorable consideration.[42] Economic necessity had prevented Congress from making the necessary appropriations during 1849. In fact, when Congress had passed the law of November 29, 1849, limiting expenditures of the government to no more than five hundred thousand pesos a month, many parts of the army program, including extensive plans for the protection of the frontier, had necessarily been dropped along with practically all navy projects.

During the following year, a number of improvements were made in the training and equipment of the army. Arista proposed that a number of horse-drawn guns and gun carriages be procured. All the old bronze cannon were collected and brought to Mexico City to be melted down and recast.[43] The blast furnace and foundry which had ceased to function as a result of American capture during the war were again put into operation. Over thirty-two thousand pesos were spent in reconditioning this equipment. Since France was still regarded as a military model, additional arms and munitions were purchased from her, and heavy machinery for Mexican ordnance plants was also obtained.[44] By decree of December 31, 1850, a school of gymnastics for the army was established and a program of physical instruction laid out on the French method.[45] The military college began to offer more intensive training in scientific and mechanical courses. New emphasis was placed on tactics and gunnery. President Herrera particularly stressed gunnery, having noted that the importance of accuracy and firepower in the recent war.

There was some excitement when, early in 1850, Deputy Gamboa revealed a scandal in munitions. It seems that Señor Loperena had received a contract and large sums of money from the government to produce rifles. Loperena had pocketed the money, but most of the rifles were sold elsewhere. Another surprise was the announced new army budget of slightly more than five million pesos, which was the lowest it had ever been.[46] Herrera's reorganization program was saving money for the taxpayers. Also during the year, five gunboats were completed: two were placed in the Gulf and three in the Pacific, which brought a further saving of revenue by curtailing the contraband trade to some extent.[47]

---

[41] *Ibid.*, 2–3.

[42] *Ibid.*, 35.

[43] "Memoria del secretario de guerra y marina, leída en le cámara de diputados el día 3 de enero de 1851," p. 29, from *Memorias de guerra y marina*, III, Doc. 34.

[44] *Ibid.*, 29–30.

[45] *Ibid.*, 32; *Leyes y decretos*, 1850–1851, pp. 184–189.

President Herrera expressed satisfaction with the improved quality, efficiency, discipline, and instruction of the army. He said that the troops themselves were better satisfied, because of increased pay, regular payment, and the establishment of a fairly-administered merit system. The result was a lessening of the number of desertions. As proof of this statement, he said:

> . . . some units have been sent on expeditions and have returned without losing a man, something that has not occurred before.[48]

"When orders have been given to military bodies to take their place on the frontier or to go on dangerous missions, they have marched," said Herrera. "There have been no mutinies in order to escape the trials of the desert or the dangers of battle." The unfaithfulness of the army

> as signalized in the name of *pronunciamiento* has disappeared, and, in the last such criminal attempt, the army remained loyal to its oath and has been what it must be: the firm defender of the law.[49]

The president stated that it had been the object of his administration to form a small, efficient, and well-equipped army at a low cost to the nation. This had been accomplished and the equipment had been purchased at the lowest possible figure. He also urged upon Congress that those who showed special talents and mental capabilities be given more rapid promotions than the current within grade time limitations allowed. These special promotions were to be based on open examinations which would stimulate a competitive spirit and improve army morale. He also praised the part-time aspect of the state militia which allowed the citizens to continue with their ordinary occupations and at the same time to augment the military forces of the nation and the means of the executive to preserve order.[50]

---

[46] "Memoria del secretario de guerra y marina, leída en la cámara de diputados el día 3 de enero de 1851," p. 29, from *Memorias de guerra y marina*, III, Doc. 34.

[47] *Ibid.*, 37.

[48] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 11.

[49] *Ibid.*, 11–12.

[50] *Ibid.*

As a final appraisal of the success of his military reform program, Herrera remarked:

> As charged with the executive power, and in particular with the direction of the army, as a man who by his profession has the honor of being in its ranks, and who from the earliest years has participated in its glories and its misfortunes, I can do no less than to congratulate you [Congress] and myself on the progress of the army. My most ardent wish as a public and private citizen is that the army of my country be the soul of honor and the defender of it.[51]

The president's reform program ranks high in the list of achievements of his administration. It was courageously conceived and vigorously executed by Herrera through Arista as Minister of War. It had attacked the vicious army organization, its inefficiency, its preponderance of officers, its special privileges, and all its inequality. The result was extremely beneficial to the nation. Coupled with the rather mild effort to restrict the political power of the church, more had been done to shake off the military-clerical control that had retarded Mexico's development into a modern state than at any time since the days of Gómez Farías. In fact, the efforts of Herrera and Arista served as a basis and precursor for the more extensive reform movement known as the War of Reform.

The problem of colonization was one closely allied with attempts to protect the frontier. Vast areas, virtually uninhabited, encouraged lawlessness and Indian attack. As Arista wisely stated: "No nation can be strong if its territory is much larger in proportion to its population."[52] President Herrera wanted to divert partially the streams of foreign immigrants going from Europe to the United States in order that some of them might be used to colonize the frontier areas of Mexico. He did not advocate, however, that these colonies be composed wholly of foreigners. Herrera felt that greater stability and loyalty would be afforded if Mexicans joined the foreign elements. One of the chief difficulties encountered was that immigrants to the United States received more pay for their labors in field and factory than Mexico could offer. To offset this disadvantage, Herrera proposed "to offer free land and immunity from taxation for a period of years to foreigners who particularly desire to live in the republic."[53] Even this noteworthy proposal received little support in Congress, which was unable to agree on a suitable colonization law because of the question of religious toleration which was involved. A large percentage of the desirable colonists from northern Europe were Protestants, and there was widespread opposition to the introduction of any but Catholic colonists into Mexico. With the failure to pass a law granting religious toleration, proper laws on colonization were delayed indefinitely.

---

[51] *Ibid.*, 15.

[52] "Memoria del secretario de estado y del despacho de guerra y marina, leída en la cámara de diputados el 26 de enero, 1850," p. 13, from *Memorias de guerra y marina*, III, Doc. 33.

[53] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 8.

Practically the only foreigners to come to Mexico to settle during Herrera's presidency were those brought by the German settler, Sartorius. He offered to bring several hundred Dutch and German families under the auspices of the Philanthropic Colonization Society to live in Mexico.[54] Some of these arrived and settled in the state of Vera Cruz.[55] However, with the failure of Congress to enact the necessary legislation, the government had to turn to military colonies and presidios as a means of frontier settlement.

By the law of July 19, 1848, military colonies were ordered to be formed at a cost not to exceed that of the presidial companies created by the law of March 20, 1826.[56] It was hoped that the protection afforded by these military outposts would attract other colonists. The northern frontier was divided into three sections, the *Oriente*, embracing Tamaulipas and Coahuila; the Chihuahua, for the state of the same name, and the *Occidente*, including Sonora and Lower California. The law also provided for a voluntary enlistment for a period of six years. After serving for this period, the recruits received a tract of land ranging from one-half a *fanega* to three *fanegas* of tillable soil. The recruit might either retire from service and settle on the land at that time, or serve a period of twelve years and have his allotment of land doubled. If the recruits purchased their own land, they received from the government six months' pay in advance, farming tools, beasts, and material for building a home. Married settlers were exempt from all taxes, even parochial. A justice of the peace in each colony served as a court of first instance. Each of the three frontier districts was placed under the direction of a colonel as inspector. A lieutenant colonel was placed in charge of two or three colonies as a sub-inspector. At each settlement, a captain was in command. The law included an appropriation of ten thousand pesos a year to be used as gifts to friendly Indians.[57]

During 1849, over a thousand recruits were sent to the frontier districts. Of these, the *Oriente* section received 434 military colonists, Chihuahua 296, and the Occidente 340.[58] Chronic lack of funds prevented complete success of the program, and the recruits tended to form roaming bands rather than fixed colonists. The original plan had called for 2,426 troops, of which 1,751 were to be cavalry, with over three thousand horses and forty-nine cannon. A total of eighteen colonies was envisaged; there were to be three in Tamaulipas, four in Coahuila, five in Chihuahua, five in Sonora, and one in Lower California. Meanwhile, a decree of April 24, 1849, established a council of two members from each of the states suffering from Indian attacks to formulate a plan for defense against these raids.

---

[54] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa*, IV, 172.

[55] *Ibid.*, 193.

[56] *Leyes y decretos*, 1848, Doc. 95, pp. 264–265.

[57] *Ibid.; Legislación mejicana*, 1848, pp. 261–269; Dublán and Lozano, *op. cit.*, V, 422–426, 747–750.

Encouragement of colonization was given by Gregorio Mier y Terán, who offered large tracts of land without charge to colonists in early 1850. *El Monitor Republicano* was high in its praise of this public-spirited act.[59] In August of the same year, President Herrera appointed a commission to make a study of the habitable lands in Sonora.[60] Additional stimulus was given when several hundred friendly Indians applied for lands along the northern frontier. The applicants consisted of three hundred and nine Seminoles, Kickapoos, and Muskogees with their families; they were welcomed with open arms by the Mexicans and later rendered good service against invading savages. These Indians were under the leadership of a chief called *el gato del monte,* or mountain cat. The Indians, for the most part, remained peaceful and loyal throughout and set a good example in agricultural development. Only the Kickapoos deserted to any large extent.

By 1851, about half of the eighteen colonies could be regarded as founded while the others stood provisionally organized. The number of recruits for them, however, was only half the stipulated number. The *Oriente* frontier, which extended for a distance of one hundred and seventy leagues and was less exposed than the others, counted seven military colonies by the close of Herrera's term of office. Monterrey was the most easterly colony which was established May 15, 1850, at Paso de Piedra opposite Laredo, Texas. Moving up the Rio Grande, the next settlement was Pan, provisionally located at Lampazos. Rio Grande was established on February 26, 1850, at Misión Nueva, twenty-one leagues above Pan. Guerrero was set up on July 19, at Piedras Negras temporarily.

---

[58] "Memoria del secretario de estado y del despacho de guerra y marina, leída en la cámara de diputados el 26 de enero, 1850," p. 16, from *Memorias de guerra y marina,* III, Doc. 33.

[59] *El Monitor Republicano,* February 28, 1850; Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 371.

[60] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 206; *Leyes y decretos,* 1850–1851, p. 124.

This colony was practically opposite Fort Duncan, Texas. Monclova Viejo was located at Moral, eight leagues above Guerrero, on August 1, 1850. San Vicente was established at Agua Verde, ten leagues above Monclova Viejo, after a temporary stay at Santa Rosa. It was decided to change the proposed site of Camargo, the seventh colony, from a spot lower down the river to a place farther north opposite the great ford of the Indian raiders at Paso de los Chizos, near the mouth of the Rio Puerco.[61]

The district of Chihuahua had one hundred and sixty leagues of frontier, covered seventeen thousand square leagues of territory, and had an insignificant population of one hundred and fifty thousand to protect the area. San Carlos, on the grounds of the old presidio, was organized in July, 1850, and was the eastern terminus of the Chihuahua line of colonies. Above San Carlos, near the mouth of the Rio de Conchos, was established a colony at the Presidio del Norte in May, with the same name. Southward along the rivers Conchos and Florido, three military outposts were planned at Las Babizas, La Cruz, and Punta de la Agua. Pilares was next in line, with El Paso forty-seven leagues above it, being fourteen leagues east of El Paso del Norte. El Paso was founded in December, 1849, near the civil colony of Guadalupe which had been largely settled by emigrants from across the Rio Grande. Another colony was set up at Janos, seventy leagues from Pilares. This left wide stretches of undefended border on either side of El Paso, and it was hoped to establish later intermediate stations in between these points.[62]

Territory included in the *Occidente* region was even more vast and desolate. Until January, 1851, presidial companies alone held this area. They were all but ready to abandon their posts when the inspector arrived in January with supply trains and reinforcements. Six colonies were then provisionally established at the old presidios of Babispe, Fronteras, Santa Cruz, Tucson, Altar, and one in Lower California at the Santo Tomás mission. This line of outposts was very irregular and was rather distantly removed from the actual border. Most of the locations were not desirable, and several of the colonies were later moved when owners of haciendas offered better land in exchange for the added protection.

After the defeat of the Sierra Gorda Indians, the Herrera government transplanted a large number of them to the northern frontier. Apparently it was hoped that, scattered along the boundary, they would mend their ways and serve as a bulwark against marauding savages. By decree of October 26, 1849, three colonies were to be established in the Sierra Gorda region. These, however, were not founded until Herrera had been relieved in the presidency by Arista in 1851. The names of these colonies were Santa Rosa Uraga, Arista, and San Ciro de Albercas.[63]

---

[61] *Legislación mejicana,* 1850, pp. 199–205; Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 574 footnote.

[62] *Ibid.;* "Memorias de guerra y marina," 1850–1851, from *Memorias de guerra y marina,* III, Docs. 33 and 34.

Early hopes for colonization by foreign immigrants had failed, owing to religious intolerance and a fear of possible reënactment of the Texas episode in the frontier provinces. Prospective Mexican colonists were slow in moving northward, preferring life in the interior states to the hardships of the frontier and the threat of Indian raids. President Herrera desired to bring these large undeveloped areas more firmly under the government's control and to form a protective barrier around Mexico's outer rim. In this he had made some progress through the establishment of military colonies and settlements of friendly Indians. He realized, however, that the only real possibility of colonizing Mexico's vast expanse lay in Europe's emigrants. He therefore urged Congress to enact appropriate legislation. In his farewell speech to the legislative body in January, 1851, Herrera said: "This field of legislation is yet to be cultivated, and to you I recommend it as of utmost importance."[64]

---

[63] *Legislación mejicana*, 1849, pp. 275–289; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 575, footnote.

[64] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 9.

CHAPTER XIII

The Last Years, 1851–1854

During the summer of 1850, Mexican public attention was drawn to the forthcoming presidential elections. Even the cholera epidemic could not dampen the campaign spirit. The moderate liberal party, led by Herrera and Arista, still occupied a favorable position in spite of some opposition to the party's moderate reform program. Public opinion had not forgotten that the conservatives under Paredes had led the nation into a disastrous war, and the *puros* and *Santanistas* were marked with the stigma of failing to prosecute that war to a successful conclusion. Their efforts to regain lost prestige and influence were for the most part unavailing.

The newspapers entered the political campaign with customary relish. *El Universal* had fired the opening gun of a bitter press warfare as early as September, 1849, when it had criticized liberals Hildalgo, Morelos, and others of the initial independence movement, calling them no better than rebels. The paper declared that the conservative, Iturbide, was the only true founder of Mexican independence. As has been seen, the liberal newspapers took up this challenge and vigorously defended Hidalgo and the liberal cause in general. Almost every newspaper had its own candidate for the presidency. By June of 1850, the situation looked something like this: *El Monitor Republicano* supported Mariano Arista, then Minister of War, as its moderate liberal candidate. *El Siglo XIX* proposed another moderate liberal, Manuel Gómez Pedraza. *El Universal* backed the candidacy of conservative Nicolás Bravo. Another conservative hopeful was Juan N. Almonte, who was aided by *La Linterna de Diógenes*. *El Demócrata* advocated Luis de la Rosa. Santa Anna was supported by *La Palanca* and *El Huracán*. *El Tribuno* worked for Gómez Farías, and *La Oposición* favored Bernardo Couto.[1]

Arista, the so-called government candidate, was designated as the man to defeat in the race. President Herrera gave his tacit support to Arista although not openly avowing any candidate. The opposition immediately set about trying to discredit General Arista. He was rightfully accused of having used doubtful methods in removing the conservative *ayuntamiento* of the capital in order to replace it with a strongly liberal membership. Arista was also charged with his using his office to promote his candidacy, which was not an uncommon practice in that day or this. Completely unjustified and unproven were the accusations of the newspaper, *El Huracán,* which stated that Arista was implicated in the "political assassination" of Juan de Dios Cañedo, a member of the Chamber of Deputies. All this, of course, was part of the opposition's political strategy to defeat Arista.

---

[1] Zamacois, *op. cit.*, XIII, 380–382; Mateos, *Historia de la masonería de México*, 117.

On the other hand, the general was evidently the favorite among the people. He had gained the reputation of helping to formulate many of the strong national measures of the Herrera administration. It was of no little significance that he enjoyed the support of the administration since no government candidate for the presidency, either before or since, has ever been defeated at the polls in Mexico. He also held the approval of a majority of the moderate liberals in Congress. Most of the state legislatures were favorable to him since the powers of the states had been upheld by the Herrera régime, and there had been a minimum of interference in state affairs by the federal government.

In spite of a union of monarchists and *Santanistas,* Arista felt confident of a victory. He confidentially informed Robert Letcher, the American Minister in Mexico, that "he expected to be the next president of the republic" and that he would do his utmost to continue the friendly relations which had existed during the presidency of Herrera.[2] The primary elections were held in early November, and these were orderly and peaceful. Within a few days it was apparent that Arista was leading the other candidates. On November 6, 1850, Letcher wrote to Daniel Webster that "the election of General Arista to the Presidency is certain."[3] However, when Congress met the first of January, 1851, and the votes were counted, it was revealed that, due to the large number of nominees, Arista did not have a majority although he held a commanding lead. The final decision of naming the president was then in the hands of the Chamber of Deputies. At eleven o'clock on the night of January 8, Congress announced that General Mariano Arista had been elected by a vote of the delegations of eight states to five for Bravo.[4]

President Herrera spoke to Congress for the last time on January 1, 1851, at the opening of its annual session. He summarized the work of his administration in all its branches. The president expressed confidence in General Arista who it appeared would be the nation's new chief executive.[5] He said he hoped that Mexico, under the administration which followed, would enjoy an era of peace and tranquillity, "conditions which are so important to the welfare of the republic." Herrera stated:

---

[2] Letter of Robert P. Letcher, United States Minister to Mexico, to Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, October 22, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.,* IX, 371.

[3] Letter of Robert P. Letcher to Daniel Webster, November 6, 1850, quoted in Manning, *op. cit.,* IX, 375.

[4] Álvarez, *Historia de México,* V, 398, Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México,* II, 377; Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 435.

> Soon I leave a position that I did not covet, and which I leave without remorse or regret. If at any time my judgment has erred, my mind has never knowingly contemplated evil. Since I have the honor to speak to you, in all probability, for the last time, I want to express to these august Chambers my profound appreciation for the constant coöperation they have given my administration; for without your support, it could not have continued. I would also express gratitude to all the officials of the federation and of the states, who, in almost all cases, have supported the government in the execution of the laws which it deemed wise to dictate, and I congratulate the people of the republic, whose good wishes and judicious opinion have so greatly aided the government in the preservation of order and the peace of the nation.[6]

In conclusion, President Herrera said:

> I should above all give most humble and devout thanks to the God of nations who, looking upon the misfortunes of Mexico with pity, has granted her a period of peace. For myself, weak instrument of the nation that I am, I give thanks that I have been able to serve and take part in an event which the Mexican people have never before seen, that is: a government that began, continued, and ended its constitutional term under the influence of law and not of violence. This favor has been granted to me and to that which I love more than life itself, to this Mexico, so unfortunate and so worthy of a better fate. Upon my retirement which comes in a few days to terminate my political career, I shall earnestly pray to the God of mercies, that he continue them to my successors, and if I live to see this wish fulfilled, I shall pass my old age in happiness and will die with hope for the welfare of my country.[7]

On January 13, a state banquet was held for President-elect Arista, and on the fifteenth in the great salon of the National Palace Herrera turned over the office of president to him. This was truly a unique event in the history of the Mexican republic. For the first time, a constitutionally-elected president had completed his term of office and had been replaced by his constitutionally-elected successor. The ceremonies were simple and without ostentation, as President Herrera had wished it. Herrera reviewed the honor guard in front of the palace for the last time; then, accompanied by General Arista, he rode in a carriage to his home in

---

[5] *Discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la república mexicana, general de división, José Joaquín Herrera, el día 1 de enero de 1851, en la apertura de las sesiones del congreso*, 5–6.

[6] *Ibid.*, 24.

[7] *Ibid.*

Tacubaya.[8] That night Arista attended the theater to hear the German Philharmonic Orchestra and to receive the plaudits of the people. Thus ended the second administration of President Herrera, one of the most honest, sincere, and responsible presidents Mexico has ever had. Although his failing strength did not match his hopes and plans, he brought to Mexico a period of peace and relative prosperity and an era of constitutional and economic development. He left public office with the admiration and respect of friends and opposition alike.

Before leaving the presidency, Herrera had written Arista, then Minister of War, requesting absolute retirement from the army. He stated that

> . . . since I am no longer useful for active duty, I do not want to hold a position whose duties I cannot discharge, nor do I wish to deprive others of promotions due them.[9]

Arista wrote to the Minister of Hacienda on January 7, saying:

> In view of a long and honorable career, his excellency the President has been granted absolute leave to become effective on February 13, 1851.[10]

It was also stipulated that General Herrera was to receive retirement pay amounting to three hundred and thirty-three pesos and two reales a month. From January 15 until the thirteenth of February, he was given a reserve status.[11] On February 26, the general wrote to the War Department acknowledging receipt of his orders for retirement and expressed his appreciation for granting his request and his satisfaction with the retirement salary which had been provided.[12] Counting double time for service during the wars for independence, Herrera was given credit in his military record for fifty-one years, one month and nineteen days of service through February 13, 1851.[13] His military career was terminated one month after his political life was brought to a close, and it might be added that in both of these fields of endeavor he had excelled. In the one, he had held the rank of General of Division and Minister of War; in the other, he had been a member of the Chamber of Deputies and President of the Mexican Republic.

For the next few months the aging general enjoyed the quiet and relaxation of his home and the company of his two children,

---

[8] Rivera Cambas, *Historia de Jalapa,* IV, 216; Riva Palacio, *op. cit.,* IV, 755.

[9] Letter of President Herrera to Minister of War Arista, January 4, 1851, found in *Expediente de Herrera,* III, Doc. 746.

[10] Letter of Mariano Arista to the Minister of Hacienda, January 7, 1851, found in *Expediente de Herrera,* III, Doc. 747.

[11] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524.

[12] Letter of General Herrera to the Minister of War, February 26, 1851, found in *Expediente de Herrera,* III, Doc. 753.

[13] *Expediente de Herrera,* I, Doc. 524.

Dolores and José Joaquín. He was quite proud of the military record that his son had made during the recent war. Young José Joaquín had been promoted to the rank of captain on January 25, 1848, and in August, 1849, had been awarded a medal for distinguished service.[14] Herrera, himself, had received a medal in November, 1847, for the part he had played in the defense of the nation.[15]

There was yet another distinguished honor in store for General Herrera. On June 5, 1851, he was appointed by President Arista, with the approval of a *junta superior*, or governing board, director of the *Nacional Monte de Piedad.* There was some opposition to the appointment which was led by Manuel de Terreros, a member of the original founding family of the institution and a current member of the board. Terreros and a small group favored Antonio María Lazpita for the position. Lazpita had served as temporary director during the last illness of Gómez Pedraza, who had been the preceding head of the *Monte.* Terreros claimed that President Arista and the *junta superior* had violated the rules governing the organization and operation of the institution and had disregarded the selection of Lazpita by the *junta menor.*[17] Regardless of the political implications of this skimish concerning the power of appointment, Herrera retained his post and served with distinction as director for the next two years.

The position of director of the *Monte de Piedad* was regarded as one of great honor and dignity. This institution was founded in 1775 by the Conde de Regla, don Pedro Romero de Terreros. It was his plan to aid the poor by loaning them money, originally at no interest. Since that day a male member of his family has sat on the board of directors. The institution is now a combination national pawnshop and loan bank. People in financial straits can pawn their jewelry, furniture, or almost any article of value and receive a high cash loan in exchange. Now it has become necessary to charge a low amount of interest in order to operate, since the donations expected by the Conde have gradually ceased. This unusual institution is housed in the huge palace built by Hernando Cortés, centuries ago. Articles that are not redeemed are sold at moderate prices, and the items for sale range from a few cents to several thousand dollars in price.

---

[14] *Expediente de Herrera*, III, Docs. 64 and 607 respectively.

[15] *Ibid.*, I, Doc. 637.

[16] Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," 57, in his *Historia genealógica*, II.

[17] This information was obtained in an interview by the author with Manuel Romero de Terreros, *director del patronato* of the *Monte de Piedad* and present member of the board, on March 19, 1946. Señor Terreros is the grandson of the Manuel Terreros referred to above.

The work of the Monte was a great boon to the poor and saved them from the exorbitant rates of the loan companies. For that reason the institution was, then even more than now, highly praised by the people, and its director occupied a place of corresponding prominence. Herrera continued as director until June 3, 1853, at which time he was removed from the directorship by Santa Anna, who had returned from exile and had replaced Arista as president. Once more the paths of Herrera and Santa Anna crossed. Santa Anna declared that Herrera's original appointment had been irregular, and he promptly satisfied the opposing group by giving the post to Lazpita. His action was more likely dictated by the fact that he had not been allowed to return to Mexico during the administrations of Herrera and Arista. It was not quite clear, moreover, how his appointment could have any more validity than that of Arista.

When General Herrera retired to private life in June of 1853, he was in a very poor state of health. Most of the remaining eight months of his life he was forced to spend in bed as a result of a painful stomach and liver condition. On February 2, 1854, he became critically ill and died on the tenth of the same month. The following day *El Siglo XIX* carried an account of his death and funeral service.

> Today the body of General D. José Joaquín de Herrera was buried in the Panteón de San Fernando without pomp, ceremony, or ostentation. The burial befitted the dignity of a virtuous citizen who, after having fought for the independence of the republic and having been twice the first magistrate of the nation, has presented himself with a pure and tranquil conscience before his Creator to give an account of his life.[18]

Although no state funeral was held, there were a large number of people present from all walks of life. Former members of Herrera's cabinet were present, such as José María Lacunza, Luis G. Cuevas, Bernardo Couto, Manuel Piña y Cuevas, Marcelino Castañeda, Pedro Fernández del Castillo, Manuel Payno. Others attending included many military men of all ranks, government employees, and employees of the *Monte de Piedad.* People representing all political groups and shades of opinion were there. Lawyers, literary figures, and men from every phase of public life stood beside the poor, the widowed, and the orphaned to whom Herrera had given assistance. All classes of society "felt the great loss that the nation had suffered."[19]

El Siglo XIX reported that the "quiet respect paid Herrera was more fitting than the most eloquent speech." Set off by heavy black lines, the obituary read:

---

[18] *El Siglo XIX*, February 11, 1854.

[19] *Ibid.*

> All remember many of the events of Señor Herrera's life and appreciate his excellent and admirable qualities. . . . The country knows it has lost one of its noblest sons. The memory of Herrera will never be forgotten in Mexico as long as the sentiments of love of country and the virtues of the man, the citizen, and the magistrate are valued.[20]

El Omnibus reported that Herrera was "an outstanding example of civic virtue and one of the authors of the independence of Mexican soil."[21] Conservative *El Universal* wrote: "At 3:30 in the morning, yesterday, his Excellency Sr. Herrera, General of Division of the Mexican Army, died after a long illness." In high tribute, the article stated that "Señor Herrera possessed the finest qualities that can be found in any person."[22]

The historian Zamacois has written that "all the newspapers dedicated to him complimentary articles, and the entire nation mourned the death of one of their finest sons."[23] Although he had held the highest offices the nation had to offer, General Herrera died in poor circumstances. He had refused to capitalize on the nation's trust and the people's confidence. Herrera "left to his children a good name and to his fellow citizens an example of true virtue,"[24] legacies more to be desired than wealth. He dedicated his life to public service and his honesty in that service came to be proverbial. His military and political careers are worthy of study, and his exemplary life merits emulation.

General Herrera was buried in a "modest niche in the grand corridor of the Panteón de San Fernando near Carlos María Bustamante and General Parrodi."[25] Almost a hundred years have passed, and the city has grown up around the cemetery and the old church. A few years ago it was suggested that his body, along with other heroes of that period, be removed to the National Independence Monument. However, that was not done, and he still remains in crypt number 401 of the Panteón. One may read today on the white marble marker this inscription:

El Exmo. Sr. Gral.
D. José Joaquín
de Herrera
Febrero 10 de
1854
R.I.P.

---

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *El Omnibus,* February 11, 1854.

[22] *El Universal,* February 11, 1854.

[23] Zamacois, *op. cit.,* XIII, 728–729; *El Diario Oficial,* whose comments were generally friendly, made slighting remarks concerning Herrera's military ability with a view to pleasing Santa Anna.

[24] Ortega, "Marquesado de Herrera," 58, in his *Historia genealógica,* II.

[25] Jesús Galinda y Villa, "El Panteón de San Fernando y el futuro panteón nacional," en *Anales del museo nacional,* Serie 2, Tomo IV, pp. 395–400.

Bibliography

I. BIBLIOGRAPHIES, CATALOGUES, AND INDICES

Bemis, S. F., and G. G. Briffin, *Guide to the Diplomatic History of the United States.* Washington (Government Printing Office), 1935.

Bibliografía de la secretaría de hacienda y crédito público, 1821–1942. México, D. F. (Imprenta del gobierno), 1943.

Castañeda, Carlos E., and J. A. Dabbs, *Guide to the Latin-American Manuscripts in The University of Texas Library.* Cambridge (Harvard University Press), 1939.

Catálogo de las colecciones históricas y arqueológicas del museo nacional de México. México (Imprenta de I. Escalante), 1882.

Catálogo general de las obras que contiene la biblioteca pública de museo nacional de arqueología, historia, y etnología. México (Imprenta del museo nacional), 1911.

García, Genaro, *Indice del archivo general de México.* (Manuscript, index and notes by Genaro García), n.d.

García Icazbalceta, Joaquín, *Catálogo de la colección de manuscritos.* México (Imprenta de la secretaría de relaciones exteriores), 1927.

Hasse, Adelaide R., *Index to United States Documents Relating to Foreign Affairs.* Washington (Carnegie Institute), 1919.

Iguíniz, Juan B., *Bibliografía biográfica mexicana. México* (Imprenta de la secretaría de relaciones exteriores), 1930.

Ker, Annita M., *Mexican Government Publications.* Washington (U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940.

II. PRIMARY SOURCES

A. Manuscripts

Archivo Militar de la Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional de México.

- *Expediente de general José Joaquín de Herrera,* Tomos I–IV, Caja número 83. (These four folders comprise the military record of General Herrera and contain such information as tours of duty, promotions, battles, leaves, honors, and official correspondence from 1809 to 1851.)

The National Archives of the United States, Washington, D. C.

- *Mexico. Notes to the Mexican Legation,* Vol. 5, September 29, 1848–June 25, 1851.
- *Mexico. Notes from the United States Embassy to the Mexican Government,* Vol. 4, April 17, 1848–September 13, 1853.
- *Mexico. Notes from the Mexican Government,* Vol. 7, 1848–1849; Vol. 8, 1850–1851.

The University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas.

- *Lucas Alamán Papers.*
- *Ignacio Comonfort Papers.*
- *Valentín Gómez Farías Papers.*
- *Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga Papers.*

The Latin-American Collection of The University of Texas.

- *Justin H. Smith Papers.*
- *Secretarios de estado del gobierno de México.* (Manuscript possibly by Genaro García with no date given.)

B. PRINTED DOCUMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Adams, E. D. (ed.), *British Diplomatic Correspondence Concerning the Republic of Texas, 1838–1846.* Austin, Texas (Texas State Historical Association), 1917.

Alessio Robles, Vito (ed.), *La correspondencia de Agustín de Iturbide desde la proclamación de la plan de Iguala.* México (Taller Autográfico), 1945. (Series number 1 published by the Archivo histórico militar mexicano.)

Documentos de la guerra de independencia. México (Imprenta de la secretaría de educación), 1945. (Volume 74 in the series known as the *Biblioteca enciclopédica popular.*)

Documentos históricos de México, Serie 32, I, 1823–1868. México (A series of historical documents with varying dates of publication).

Ejército de México, II, Docs. 1–6. México (Imprenta del gobierno), n. d. (A series of pamphlets concerning military affairs.)

Hackett, Charles W. (ed. and trans.), *Pichardo's Treatise on the Limits of Louisiana and Texas,* Vols. I–IV. Austin (The University of Texas Press), 1931–1947.

Hernández y Dávalos, Juan E. (ed.), *Colección de documentos para la historia de la guerra de independencia de México de 1808 a 1821,* México (J. M. Sandoval), 1877–1882.

Malloy, W. R. (ed.), *Treaties and Conventions of the United States.* Washington (Government Printing Office), 1904.

Manning, W. R. (ed.), *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, 1831–1860,* Mexico, Vols. VIII and IX. Washington (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), 1937.

Richardson, J. D. (ed.), *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789–1897.* Washington (Government Printing Office), 1902.

C. LAWS AND DECREES

Acta constitucional presentada al soberano congreso constituyente por su comisión el día 20 de noviembre de 1823. México (Imprenta del supremo gobierno), 1823.

Actas del congreso constituyente mejicano, I–IV. México (Imprenta de D. Alejandro Valdés), 1822.

Arrillaga, Basilio José, *Recopilación de leyes, decretos, reglamentos, circulares y providencias de los supremos poderes. México* (Imprenta de J. M. Fernández de Lara), 1838–1850.

Colección de leyes, 1831–1834. México (Biblioteca de relaciones exteriores), n.d. (This is a collection of miscellaneous laws, proclamations and decrees which does not give document or page numbers).

Dublán, Manuel, and Lozano, José María (eds.), *Legislación mejicana o colección completa de las disposiciones legislativas expedidas desde la independencia de la república,* I–V. México (Imprenta del comercio, a cargo de Dublán y Lozano hijos), 1876.

Informes y manifiestos de los poderes executivo y legislativo de 1821 á 1904. México (Imprenta del gobierno federal), 1905. (Among other important documents, approximately a dozen speeches of President Herrera to Congress, made in 1845 and 1848–1851, are found in this collection.)

Legislación mejicana ó sea colección completa de las leyes, decretos y circulares que se han expedido desde la consumación de la independencia. México (Imprenta de Juan R. Navarro), 1856.

Ley de 4 de noviembre de 1848 sobre del arreglo del ejército. México (Imprenta de Vicente García Torres), 1848.

Ley orgánica de la guardia nacional. México (Imprenta de Ignacio Cumplido), 1848.

Leyes y decretos mejicanos de enero á diciembre 1848. México (Biblioteca de ministerio de hacienda—imprenta en el palacio), 1852.

Leyes y decretos mejicanos de enero á abril 1849. México (Biblioteca de ministerio de hacienda—imprenta de J. M. Lara), 1850.

Leyes y decretos mejicanos de enero á diciembre 1850 y 1851. México (Biblioteca de ministerio de hacienda—imprenta de J. M. Lara), 1850–1851.

Mateos, Juan A. (ed.), *Historia parlamentaria de los congresos mexicanos, 1821–1857.* México (Reyes), 1877.

Reglamento de la guardia de policía del distrito. México (Vicente García Torres), 1848.

D. *Memorias*, REPORTS, AND SPEECHES

Colección de memorias de guerra y marina, I–III. México (J. Anadiano), 1862.

Colección de memorias de relaciones exteriores y interiores, 1822–1859, I–IV. México (J. Anadiano), 1862.

Colección de memorias de relaciones, 1848–1851. México (Biblioteca de relaciones exteriores y interiores—imprenta del gobierno), 1851.

Colonias militares. Proyecto para su establecimiento en las fronteras de oriente y occidente de la república. México (Imprenta de I. Cumplido), 1848.

Dictamen de la junta de señores generales nombrada por el supremo gobierno para informar sobre el arreglo del ejército, formado por el exmo. Sr. presidente de la república, general de división, D. José Joaquín de Herrera. México (Impreso en la calle de Medinas num. 6), 1849.

Escalafón general del ejército. México (Imprenta del Águila), 1849.

Esposición del ministro de hacienda a las cámaras sobre el estado de la hacienda pública, 1849–1850. México (Vicente Torres), 1850.

Herrera, José Joaquín de, *Discurso por el presidente de la república mexicana en la apertura del congreso, 1 de enero de 1851.* México (Vicente Torres), 1851.

——— *Discurso pronunciado ante el congreso general por el exmo. Sr. general D. José J. de Herrera, 16 de septiembre de 1845.* México (Impreso en la calle de Medinas num. 6), 1845.

——— [*Proclama*] *á los habitantes de la república.* Puebla (Imprenta antigua en el portal de flores), n.d. (1844).

——— *Proyecto de estatuto del ejército mexicano.* México (Imprenta de I. Cumplido), 1848.

Memorias de hacienda, 1848, 1849, 1850 and 1851. México (Biblioteca de hacienda—imprenta del gobierno), 1848–1851. (These are separately published reports in pamphlet form.)

Memorias del ministro de justicia, 1848–1851. México (Ministerio de justicia—imprenta del gobierno), 1851.

Memoria de relaciones interiores y esteriores leída al soberano congreso constituyente por el ministro, José María Lafragua. México (Imprenta de Vicente García Torres), 1847.

E. MEMOIRS AND DIARIES

Calderón de la Barca, Frances Erskine, *Life in Mexico During a Residence of Two Years in That Country.* London (Chapman and Hall), 1843.

Polk, James K., *Polk, the Diary of a President, 1845–1849.* London (Longmans, Green and Company), 1929.

Prieto, Guillermo, *Memorias de mis tiempos.* Paris (Vda. de C. Bouret), 1906.

Watkins, Willie W., (trans. and ed.), *Memoirs of General Antonio López de Santa Anna.* (Master's thesis in The University of Texas Library), 1922.

F. INTERVIEWS

Interview of the author with Manuel Romero de Terreros, *director del patronato* of the *Nacional Monte de Piedad* in Mexico City, March 19, 1946.

Interview of the author with Diego Ortega y Roa, great-grandnephew of President Herrera, in Mexico City on March 26, 1946. A letter by Ortega to the author on March 28 confirmed a part of this interview in regard to the family life of Herrera.

III. NEWSPAPERS

El Amigo del Pueblo (México), 1845.
El Arco Iris (Vera Cruz), 1848–1851.
La Aurora de Libertad (Oaxaca), 1845.
El Boletín de la Patria (Campeche), 1848.
El Demócrata (México), 1850.
El Diario Oficial (México), 1848–1854.
El Eco del Comercio (México), 1848–1849.
El Estopín (Querétaro), 1848.
El Huracán (México), 1849–1850.
La Linterna de Diógenes (México), 1850.
El Monitor Constitucional (México), 1845.
El Monitor Republicano (México), 1848–1851.
El Omnibus (México), 1854.
La Oposición (México), 1850.
La Palanca (México), 1850.
El Siglo XIX (México), 1845–1854.
El Sol (México), 1822.
El Tiempo (México), 1848.
El Tribuno (México), 1850.
El Universal (México), 1848–1851.

IV. SECONDARY SOURCES

A. THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Ellison, Simon Jay, *James Buchanan and the Mexican Question, 1821–1849.* Austin (Master's thesis in The University of Texas Library), 1933.

Estep, Raymond, *The Life of Lorenzo de Zavala.* Austin (Doctor's dissertation in The University of Texas Library), 1942.

Johnson, Richard A., *The Preliminaries and Causes of the Mexican Revolution of Ayutla, 1853–1854.* Austin (Master's thesis in The University of Texas Library), 1933.

Shearer, Ernest C., *Border Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Mexico, 1848–1860.* Austin (Doctor's dissertation in The University of Texas Library), 1939.

B. ARTICLES FROM PERIODICALS

Barker, E. C., "The Influence of Slavery in the Colonization of Texas," in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 28, July, 1924, No. 1, pp. 1–34.

———— "The United States and Mexico, 1835–1837," reprinted from the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 1, June, 1914.

Benson, Nettie Lee, "The Plan of Casa Mata," in the *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. XXV, No. 1, February, 1945, pp. 45–56.

Galinda y Villa, Jesús, "El panteón de San Fernando y el futuro panteón nacional," en *Anales del museo nacional de México*, Serie 2, Tomo IV. México (Imprenta del museo nacional).

Mecham, J. Lloyd, "Mexican Federalism—Fact or Fiction," in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (Mexico Today)*, Vol. 208, March, 1940, pp. 33–38.

C. SPECIAL STUDIES

Ancona, Eligio, *Historia de Yucatán.* Barcelona (Imprenta de Jaime Jepúa Roviralta), 1889.

Bulnes, Francisco, *La guerra de independencia, Hidalgo-Iturbide.* México (Talleres linotipográficos de "El Diario"), 1910.

Bustamante, Carlos María, *Campañas del general D. Felix María Calleja, comandante en gefe del ejército real de operaciones, llamado del centro.* México (Imprenta del Águila), 1828.

Callahan, James M., *American Foreign Policy in Mexican Relations.* New York (Macmillan Company), 1932.

Callcott, Wilfrid H., *Church and State in Mexico, 1822–1857.* Durham, North Carolina (Duke University Press), 1926.

———— *Santa Anna, The Story of An Enigma Who Once Was Mexico.* Norman, Oklahoma (University of Oklahoma Press), 1936.

Cuevas, Mariano P., *Historia de la iglesia en México,* V. El Paso, Texas (Editorial "Revista Católica"), 1928.

De Kay, John W., *Dictators of Mexico.* London (E. Wilson), 1914.

Elias, Arturo M., *The Mexican People and the Church.* New York (A. M. Elias), 1926.

Fernández, Roberto D., *Los gobernantes de México desde don Agustín de Iturbide hasta el gral. don Plutarco Elias Calles.* Sabinas, Coahuila (Editorial Cuahtemoc), 1931.

Gibaja y Patron, Antonio, *Commentario a las revoluciones sociales de México,* III. México (Tipografía Universal), 1926.

Hanighen, Frank C., *Santa Anna, the Napoleon of the West.* New York (Coward-McCann), (c. 1934).

Jenkins, John S., *The Life of James Nash Polk.* Auburn (J. M. Alden), 1850.

Lerdo de Tejada, Miguel M., *Comercio esterior de México, desde la conquista hasta hoy.* México (Impreso por R. Rafael), 1853.

Mateos, José María, *Historia de la masonería en México, desde 1806 hasta 1884.* México (La Tolerancia), 1884.

Manning, W. R., *The Early Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Mexico.* Baltimore (The Johns Hopkins Press), 1916.

McCormac, Eugene I., *James K. Polk, A Political Biography.* Berkeley, California (University of California Press), 1922.

Mecham, John Lloyd, *Church and State in Latin America.* Chapel Hill (The University of North Carolina Press), 1934.

Miller, H. G., *The Isthmian Highway.* New York (Macmillan Company), 1929.

Observaciones imparciales acerca del administración financiera en la época del gobierno provisional. México (J. M. Lara), 1845. (Signed "Varios mexicanos.")

Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, Ricardo, *Historia genealógica de la familias más antiguas de México.* I–III. México (Imprenta de A. Carranza y Compañía), 1908.

Peral, Miguel Ángel (ed.), *Diccionario biográfico mexicano.* México (Editorial P. A. C.), 1944.

Pereyra, Carlos, *Tejas, la primera desmembración de Méjico.* Madrid (Sociedad española de librería), n.d.

Ramírez, José Fernando, *México durante su guerra con los Estados Unidos.* México (Vda. de C. Bouret), 1905.

Ramsey, Albert C., *The Other Side: or A Mexican History of the War in Mexico.* New York (John Wiley), 1850.

Rivera Cambas, Manuel, *Historia antigua y moderna de Jalapa y de las revoluciones del estado de Vera Cruz.* México (Imprenta de I. Cumplido), 1869–1871.

——— *Los gobernantes de México.* México (Imprenta de J. M. Aguilar Ortiz), 1872.

Robinson, Fayette, *Mexico and Her Military Chieftains, from the Revolution of Hidalgo to the Present Time.* Philadelphia (E. H. Butler and Company), 1847.

Romances de la guerra de independencia. México (Secretaría de educación pública), 1945. (This is volume 71 in the Biblioteca Enciclopédica Popular series.)

Sánchez, George I., *Mexico; A Revolution by Education.* New York (The Viking Press), 1936.

Smith, J. H., *The War with Mexico,* I–II. New York, (Macmillan Company), 1919.

Thompson, Waddy, *Recollections of Mexico.* New York (Wiley and Putnam), 1846.

Turlington, Edgar W., *Mexico and Her Foreign Creditors.* New York (Columbia University Press), 1930.

Tyler, Lyon G., *The Letters and Times of the Tylers.* Richmond (Whittet and Shepperson), 1884–1896.

Ward, H. G., *Mexico in 1827.* London (H. Colburn), 1828.

Valadés, José C., *Alamán, estadista e historiador.* México (J. Porruá e hijos), 1938.

Valle-Arispe, Artemio de, *El palacio nacional de México.* México (G. Horner), 1936.

Wilcox, Cadmus M., *History of the Mexican War.* Washington, D. C. (The Church News Publishing Company), 1892.

Wilson, Emilia Serrano de, *México y sus gobernantes de 1519 á 1910.* Barcelona (Tipografía de la casa editorial Maucci), 1910.

D. GENERAL ACCOUNTS

Abbot, Gorham D., *Mexico and the United States; Their Mutual Relations and Common Interests.* New York (G. P. Putnam and Sons), 1869.

Alamán, Lucas, *Disertaciones sobre la historia de la república mexicana.* México (J. M. Lara), 1844–1849.

——— *Historia de Méjico,* IV, V. México. (Imprenta de J. M. Lara), 1849–1852.

Álvarez, Ignacio, *Estudios sobre la historia general de México,* III–VI. Zacatecas (Mariano Ruíz de Esparza), 1876.

Arboleya, José de, *España y Méjico,* I. Havana (Imprenta de O'Reilly), 1861.

Arrangoiz, D. Francisco de Paula de, *Méjico desde 1808 hasta 1867,* II. Madrid (Imprenta á cargo de A. P. Dubrull), 1872.

Bancroft, Hubert H., *History of Mexico*, IV–V, in Works, XII–XIII. San Francisco (A. L. Bancroft and Company), 1885.

Bell, Edward I., *The Political Shame of Mexico.* New York (McBride, Nast and Company), 1914.

Bocanegra, José María de, *Memorias para la historia de México independiente, 1822–1846.* México (Imprenta del gobierno federal en el ex-arzobispado), 1892.

Bulnes, Francisco (translation by Dora Scott), *The Whole Truth About Mexico.* New York (M. Bulnes Book Company), 1916.

Bustamante, Carlos María de, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana.* México (Imprenta de J. M. Lara), 1843–1846.

Carreño, Alberto María, *México y los Estados Unidos de America.* México (Imprenta Victoria), 1922.

Cuevas, Mariano, *Historia de la nación mexicana.* México (Talleres tipográficos modelo), 1940.

Cuevas, Luis Gonzaga, *Porvenir de México.* México (Imprenta de I. Cumplido), 1851–1857.

Gruening, Ernest H., *Mexico and Its Heritage.* New York (The Century Company), 1928.

Latané, J. H., *A History of American Foreign Policy.* New York (Doubleday, Doran and Company), 1927.

——— *The United States and Latin America.* New York (Doubleday, Page and Company), 1920.

Moon, Parker T., *Imperialism and World Politics.* New York (Macmillan Company), 1926.

Mora, José María Luis, *Méjico y sus revoluciónes.* Paris (Librería de Rosa), 1836.

Negrete, Emilio de Castillo, *México en el siglo XIX ó sea su historia desde 1800 hasta la época presente.* México (Imprenta en las escalerilas num. 13), 1875.

Parkes, Henry B., *A History of Mexico.* Boston (Houghton Mifflin Company), 1938.

Priestley, Herbert Ingram, *The Mexican Nation, A History.* New York (Macmillan Company), 1923.

Rippy, J. Fred., *The United States and Mexico.* New York (A. A. Knopf), 1926.

Riva Palacio, Vicente (ed.), *México á través de los siglos*, IV. Barcelona (Espasa y compañía), 1888–1889.

Rives, George L., *The United States and Mexico, 1821–1848.* New York (C. Scribner's Sons), 1913.

Stuart, G. H., *Latin America and the United States.* New York (Century Company), 1928.

Tornel y Mendívil, José María, *Breve reseña histórica de los acontecimientos más notables de la nación mexicana, desde el año de 1821 hasta nuestros dias.* México (Imprenta de Cumplido), 1852.

Vasconcelos, José. *Breve historia de México.* México (Ediciones Botas), 1938.

Zamacois, Niceto de, *Historia de México desde sus tiempos más remotos hasta nuestros dias*, X–XIII. México (F. J. Parres y compañía), 1878–1902.

INDEX

A.

Aberdeen, Lord, 125, 126, 127
Acta Constitutiva, 58
Aguilar, Bruno, 134
Aguirre, Judge Joaquín G., 189
Alaguíbel, F. M. de, 193
Alamán, Lucas, 16, 61, 76, 91, 194, 195, 206, 212, 286
Alcalde, Diego M., 7
Alcorta, General, 152
Aldama, Captain Juan, 14, 15
    execution, 19
Alhóndiga de Granaditas, Guanajuato, attack on, 16, 17, 19, 180
Allende, Ignacio, 14, 15, 17
    execution, 19
Almonte, Juan N., 121, 122, 136, 145, 148, 149, 169, 316
Álvarez, Juan, 73, 110, 145, 154, 189, 193, 241
Alzugarary, Doña Dolores, 5, 93
Alzazua, Eduardo, 3
American Boundary Commission, 260–263
Ampudia, General, 149, 153
Anaya, General Juan Pablo, 111, 184
Anaya, General Pedro M., 137, 138, 147, 196
    acting president, 157, 165
    ad interim president, 166
Andrade, José Antonio de, 52
Andrade, Juan de, 99
Andrade, General Manuel, 302
Apodaca, Juan Ruíz de, 27, 29, 33, 34, 35, 39
Arbeu, Francisco, 295
Arellano, Governor Lorenzo, 178
Arista, General Mariano, 133, 145, 146, 148, 153, 173, 179, 182, 187, 188, 192–198, 201, 234, 239, 259, 286, 301, 306–309, 311, 316–318, 321
    president, 317–320
Armenta, Spanish Minister, 272, 275
Armijo, Colonel, 24, 25
Army, general staff established, 62
Army, reorganization, 62–64, 81–86, 301–305
Arrangoiz, Francisco de, 194, 195, 211, 212, 228
Arrillaga, Francisco de, 61
Arroyo, Miguel, 158
Atristaín, Miguel, 158, 159, 161, 165, 166
Ávila, Julián de, 28
Aviléz, José María, 198
Ay, Antonio, 223, 224

B.

Babbitt, Brevet Major Edwin B., 264
Baggally, Santiago, 295
Bankhead, Charles, 125, 126, 127
Barbachano, Governor, 231, 234, 235, 236
Barnard, Major J. G., 257
Barragán, General Miguel, 80, 86, 90, 91, 95
Barrio, Neri del, 276
Bartlett, Mr., American Consul, 260, 263
Basadre, 111
    exiled, 115
Bases Orgánicas de la República Mexicana, 1843, 102, 105, 107, 116, 118, 119, 121, 130, 134, 138
Belgium, 277
Belliard, J. B., 133
Beltrán, 239, 240
Bermúdez de Castro, Salvador, 141
Black, John, 128, 129, 143, 154
Bocanegra, José M., General, 73
Bonaparte, Joseph, 12, 15
Bonaparte, Napoleon, 12
Bravo, Nicolás, 26, 36, 37, 38, 43, 50, 51, 54, 55, 57, 61, 76, 110, 114, 154, 162, 204, 241, 316, 317
    provisional president, 101, 152
    vice-president, 65, 66, 69, 70
Brazil, 58
Buchanan, James, 129, 142, 143, 150, 198, 203, 210, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 270, 271, 301
Bulnes, Francisco, 203, 300
Burr, Aaron, 100
Bustamante, Anastasio, 35, 95, 120, 140, 148, 174, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 191, 192, 238, 239, 307
    president, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 95, 96–99, 206
    vice-president, 70, 71, 73
Bustamante, Carlos María, 46, 50, 206, 322
Butler, Major-General William, 166, 168

C.

Calderón, Fernando, 134
Calderón de la Barca, Ángel, 95
Calderón de la Barca, Madame, 287
California, 139, 167, 175, 179, 186, 209, 252, 253, 261, 263, 266, 268, 269, 271
Calleja, General Felix María, 15, 17–20, 22, 23
    Spanish viceroy, 24, 27
Campo y Cabrera, Doña Adriana, 2

Canalizo, General Valentín, 140, 201
  exiled, 115
  imprisoned, 107, 111
  interim president, 104, 105, 106
  provisional vice-president, 101, 103
Cañedo, Juan de Dios, 71, 197, 198, 233, 234, 317
Carmen, Island of, 226, 227, 228
Carpenter, John, 265
Castañeda, Marcelino, 197, 286, 321
Castañeda, Nicolás, 176
Castillo y Luna, Lieutenant Colonel, 38
Centralist party, 57, 90, 92, 130
Chan, Florentino, 229, 232
Charles II, of Spain, 1
Charles IV, of Spain, 4, 12
Cherallie, M. H., 243
Chí, Cecelio, 223, 224, 229, 236
Cholera epidemic, 78, 198, 216, 316
Church in Mexico, 140, 207, 222, 278–290
Ciprey, Baron de, 125, 141, 142, 276
Clara, Juan, 240
Claudon, Claudio, 133
Clayton, John M., 249, 251, 253, 254, 255, 256, 260, 261, 262, 264, 265, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 273, 276
Clifford, Nathan, 167, 168, 176, 209, 210, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 253, 254, 270, 272, 301
Columna de Granaderos, 35–36
Committee of Notables, 43, 101
Congress of Chilpancingo, 23
Conkling, Alfred, 274
Conrad, Charles M., 266
Constituent Congress of 1822, 44–52
  dissolved, 52
  reconvened, 55
Constituent Congress of 1823, 57
Constitution of Apatzingán, 1814, 23
Constitution of 1812, 24, 29, 32, 43
Constitution of 1824, 155, 156, 226
Constitution of 1834, 222
Corro, José Justo, 95
Cortazar, General Pedro, 112, 113, 114, 180
Cortés de Paredes, Doña Josefa, 147
Couto, Bernardo, 137, 158, 159, 161, 166, 168, 248, 316, 321
Creoles, demands for self-government, 13
Cuerpo Nacional de Artillería, 68
Cuevas, Luis G., 107, 121, 123, 124, 126, 136, 166, 168, 169, 248, 249, 251, 260, 276, 277, 282, 321

D.

Dávila, General, 46, 51, 52
Degollado, Santos, 179
Denman, Lieutenant F. J., 267
Derrick, William S., 266
Díaz, Porfirio, 64, 220, 305
Doblado, Manuel, 178, 179, 183
Domínguez, Miguel, 14, 43
  imprisoned, 15
Donelson, Major A. J., 125, 128

E.

Echávarri, 54, 55
Echeverría, Pedro, 107
Elizondo, Ignacio, 19
Elliot, Captain Charles, 125, 126, 127
Elorriaga, Francisco, 213, 214, 215
Emory, Major W. H., 262
Emparan, Colonel, 20
England, 10, 67, 96, 97, 103, 124, 125, 128, 129, 141, 142, 161, 205, 223, 230, 231, 234, 252, 254, 255, 256, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276
Erdozain, Colonel Pablo, 65
Escandón, Manuel, 295
Esteva, 203, 207, 218, 219
Everett, Edward, 274
Ewing, Thomas, 262

F.

Federalist party, 57, 97, 101, 152
Ferdinand VI, of Spain, 1
Ferdinand VII, of Spain, 12, 23–27, 29, 30, 32, 34, 40, 45
Fernández, Félix, *See* Victoria, Guadalupe
Fernánedz de Castillo, Pedro, 137, 321
Fernández Monjardín, Antonio, 158
Ferrier, Jacob, 48
Filisola, General, 40–41, 71, 146
Flores, Juan María, 178, 305, 307
France, 1, 12, 63, 96, 103, 124, 125, 128, 129, 141, 142, 272, 274, 276, 292, 308, 309
Freemasonry in Mexico, 46, 53, 55, 56, 66, 90
"French Pastry War," 96
French Revolution, 10, 48, 74

G.

Gachupines, 10, 13. 27. 46
Gadsden, James, 260, 263
Galeano, Hildegardo, 25–26
Garay, Antonio, 158
Garay, José de, 240, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 259
García Campomanes, Manuel, 3
García Conde, Pedro, 107, 111, 260, 261
García Illueca, Colonel Ignacio, 61
Garibay, Pedro de, 13
Gil, M. A., 232
Godoy, Manuel, 12
Gómez de Parada, Francisco, 81

- Gómez Farías, Valentín, 49, 50, 59, 79, 81, 90, 92, 95, 97, 115, 120, 140, 149, 155, 279, 291, 311, 316
  - provisional president, 152, 154
  - reforms, 77
  - vice-president, 76, 77, 78, 80, 87, 88, 152, 157
- Gómez Navarette, Juan N., 55, 155
- Gómez Pedraza, Manuel, 103, 129, 136, 137, 169, 259, 316, 320
  - president, 70–71, 72, 73, 76, 78, 79
- González, Doña María Josefa, 2
- González Angulo, Bernardo, 79, 97
- González del Campillo, Manuel María, 9
- Goury, French Minister, 272, 276
- Granja, Juan de la, 295
- Great Britain, *See* England
- Green, Pedro, 295
- "El grito de Dolores," 15, 193
- Guadalupe, Order of, 51
- "Guadalupes," organization of, 13
- Guadarrama, Anastasio, 176
- Guanajuato, military engagements in, 16, 180
- Guerra Manzanares, General, 176
- Guerrero, Vicente, 21, 26, 28, 29, 34, 35, 39, 49, 54, 70, 115, 221, 241
  - execution, 74, 76
  - president, 71–74
- Gutiérrez, Bonifacio, 212, 216
- Guzmán, General Angel, 237, 238
- Guzmán, Nuño de, 16

H.

- Hargous, Peter A., and brother, 252, 254, 257, 274
- Haro y Tamaríz, 111, 112, 114
- Hays, Colonel Jack, 165, 265
- Herrera, Doña Ana María de, 7
- Herrera, José Joaquín de
  - advocates citizen militia, 47
  - birth, 3
  - brigadier, Army of Independence, 43, 47, 52
  - brothers and sisters, 3
  - captain of militia, 25
  - captain of grenadiers, 29
  - captain-general of Mexico, 60
  - character, 31, 41, 43, 59, 74, 93, 94, 110
  - childhood, 9
  - commandant-general, Durango, 78
  - commandant-general, Guadalajara, 66
  - commandant-general, Michoacán, 65
  - commandant-general, Mexico, 159
  - commandant-general, Oaxaca, 75
  - commandant-general, Puebla, 72
  - commandant-general, Yucatán, 65
  - death, 321–322
  - decorated by Pope, 281
  - deputy in Congress, 44, 59, 68, 69, 155
  - director, National Artillery Corps, 68
  - director, Nacional Monte de Piedad, 320
  - financial difficulties, 72, 75, 94–95
  - *general de división*, 80
  - governor, Federal District, 69, 71, 79
  - holds cabinet post, 59, 60
  - judge, Supreme Military Tribunal, 78, 86, 92
  - imprisioned by Iturbide, 52
    - released, 55
  - imprisoned by Santa Anna, 99
  - inspector-general, permanent militia, 80, 92, 97
  - interim president, 106
  - leaves royal military service, 30
  - lieutenant colonel, royal military service, 29
  - marriage, 93
  - member, congressional committees, 45, 68, 69
  - military commander, Acapulco, 29, 30
  - military reforms, 47, 61–64, 81–86, 118, 132, 299
  - Minister of War and Marine, 53, 60, 65, 71, 79, 80, 81, 86, 92, 301
  - officer, independent forces, 35–41
  - opened apothecary shop, 30–31
  - political views, 30, 50
  - president, 110–151, 170, 172–315
    - diplomatic relations, 245–277
    - national financial status, 201–208
    - national reforms, 80
      - colonization, 314–315
      - education, 290–293
      - government, 132–134, 200–201
      - health, 293–294
      - industry, 295–297
      - military, 299
    - relations with state governments, 199, 200
    - resigns, 149
  - president of Congress, 155, 156
  - president, Supreme Military Tribunal, 97, 99, 100
  - service during Mexican War, 156–157, 158
  - service in Army of the Three Guarantees, 40
  - service in Crown Regiment, 9–25
    - awarded *escudo de distinción*, 25
    - awarded *medalla de distinción*, 19
  - service in *Milicias de Chilapa*, 25–28
  - service with the *Batallón del Sur*, 28–30
- Herrera, Vicente de, 4

Herrera y Alzugaray, Doña Dolores de, 5, 93, 320
Herrera y Alzugaray, José Joaquín, 93, 320
Herrera y Cabello, Don Pedro de, 1
Herrera y Campo, José Agustín, 2, 6
  death, 4
Hevia, Francisco, 37, 38
Hidalgo y Costillo, Miguel, 14–19, 33, 39, 193, 194, 221, 316
  character, 14–15
  execution, 19
Hierro, Juan, 207
Houston, Sam, 95, 119
Hughes, Charles Evans, 258
Hunter, William, 254, 256, 274

I.

Icaza, Antonio, 206, 207
Inclán, General Ignacio, 113, 114, 127
Indian problems, 221–244, 263–265, 272, 304, 305, 308, 311
Instituent Committee, 52
Italy, 98
Iturbe, Fernando, 212, 213
Iturbide, Agustín de, 13, 25, 26, 30, 31, 33, 37, 38, 40–56, 57, 59, 60, 66, 74, 84, 90, 112, 115, 290, 316
  abdicates throne, 55
  dissolves Constituent Congress, 52
  emperor of Mexico, 48, 49, 51
  execution, 56, 59
  exiled, 55
  expedition against Guerrero, 34
  reconvenes Constituent Congress, 55
Iturrigaray, Spanish viceroy, 13

J.

Jarauta, Father Celedonio, 174, 175, 176, 181, 182, 183, 230, 237, 250, 286, 298, 301
  execution, 182
Jesup, Major General Thomas S., 264
Jiménez, Joaquín, 297
Jiménez, José María, 169, 173, 188, 195, 197, 280, 286
Jones, Anson, 125, 126, 127, 128
Juárez, Benito, 140, 192, 222, 256, 276
Junta de Notables, 43, 101
Junta de Representantes, 152

L.

Lacunza, José María de, 196, 249, 251, 255, 256, 258, 275, 321
Lasola, José Antonio, 9
Lazo, Miguel, 184
Lazpita, Antonio María, 320, 321
Leon, Estéban V., 189
Lerdo de Tejada, 288
Letcher, Robert, 240, 249, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 272, 276, 317
Levasseur, French Minister, 272, 274, 276
Lombardini, General, 180
Louis XIV, of France, 1
Llava, Pablo de la, 61

M.

Maciel, Víctor, 25
Madero, Francisco, 222
Maldonado, Governor, 239
Marcha, Pío, 48
Marcy, William L., 260, 263
Márquez, Leonardo, 190, 191, 192, 230, 238, 298, 308
Martínez, General Ignacio, 127
Martínez Negrete, José María, 175–176
Matamoros, 21, 26
Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, 56, 93, 191, 194, 276
Mejía, General Tomás, 191, 192, 239
Mendoza, Antonio de, 221
Mexican Boundary Commission, 260, 261
Michelena, Mariano, 97
Micheltorena, General, 233
Mier, Servando Teresa de, 51, 52, 57
Mier y Terán, Gregorio, 313
Mier y Terán, Manuel, 26, 27, 57, 65, 78
Military triumvirate, 57
Mina, Francisco Javier, 27
  executed, 28
Miñón, General, 152, 180, 182, 307
Miramón, General, 93
Monroe Doctrine, 96
Monteagudo, Matías, 33
Montenegro, Nicolás, 176
Montepío, 204, 205
Monte de Piedad, 320–321
Montes de Oca y Aguero, Colonel Demetrio, 28, 139
Mora, José María, 299
Mora y Villamil, General Ignacio, 88, 158, 159, 161, 165
Morelos, José María, 20–26, 33, 39, 65, 189, 193, 221, 316
  character, 21
  executed, 26
munitions scandal, 309
Múzquiz, General Melchoir, 72, 73

N.

National budget, 64, 210
National debt, 201–210, 211–220
National Independence Monument, 41, 42
Navy, enlargement of, 63, 64, 86, 308, 310
Negrete, Pedro Celestino, 57, 66
New Mexico, 127, 144, 160, 161, 167, 175, 179, 185, 263, 266, 268, 269

Novella, General, 39
Novelo, Bonifacio, 224, 232

O.

Ocampo, Melchor, 134, 169, 215, 216, 282, 284, 296
O'Donojú, Juan, 39–41, 45
Organic Bases, *See Bases Orgánicas de la República*
Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, Ricardo, 93, 150
Ortega y Roa, Diego, 2, 4, 7, 93, 282
Ortíz, Eligio, 176
Ortíz, Jacopo, 98
Ortíz, Colonel Juan, 175
Ortíz, Josefa María, 14, 15
Osorno, José Francisco, 26, 27
Otero, Mariano, 137, 141, 173, 188, 198, 209, 245, 246, 248, 250, 251

P.

Palacios Miranda, Antonio, 183, 184
Parás, Governor José María, 179
Paredes y Arrillaga, General, 98, 103, 104, 105, 110, 111, 113, 114, 122, 127, 135, 139, 140, 142, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 159
  president, 152, 154
  revolt, 174–187, 192, 201, 204, 210, 230, 237, 250, 251, 286, 298, 300, 301, 307, 316
Parian market, sack of, 71, 95
Parrodi, General, 322
Parrott, John, 271
Parrott, William S., 129, 136, 142, 143, 198
Pat, Antonio (Jacinto), 223, 224, 229, 236
Payno, Manuel, 184, 202, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 273, 321
  financial report, 217
Pedreguera y Romero de Terreros, Manuel de la, 5
Peña y del Río, Colonel Juan de la, 78
Peña y Peña, Manuel de la, 137, 138, 143, 144, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 171, 175, 201, 207, 251, 252
  ad interim president, 172
Peón y Contreras, José, 34
Pérez Gálvez, Conde de, 111
Perry, Colonel, 28
Perry, Commodore, 227, 228
Pesado, José J., 169
Philip V, of Spain, 1
Piña y Cuevas, Manuel, 202, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 321
Pius IX, Pope, 6, 281, 283
Plan de Aguascalientes, 177
Plan de Casa Mata, 55, 60
Plan de Cuernavaca, 88
Plan de Iguala, 34–35, 37, 39, 40, 44, 49, 221
Plan de Jalapa, 73, 74
Plan de Montaño, 69, 70
Plan de San Luis Potosí, 146, 149
Plan de Tacubaya, 101, 103, 104
Plan de Vera Cruz, 55
Poinsett, Joel R., 66
Polk, James K., President, 129, 143, 144, 145, 152, 153, 154, 156, 158, 166, 245, 246, 247, 260
Portugal, 12, 129
Prieto, Guillermo, 147, 282
Pronunciamento, 54, 104, 131, 147, 148, 166, 219, 299
Protocol of Querétaro, 168, 247, 248

Q.

Querétaro, conspiracy of, 14, 17, 39
Quijano, General Benito, 196
Quintana, General, 73
Quiros, 191, 192, 237, 238, 239, 243, 307

R.

Railroad and canal projects, 252, 253, 257
Ramírez, Juan, 239
Ramos Arizpe, Miguel, 39, 46, 57, 58, 59, 79
Rangel, General Joaquín, 130, 131
Rayón, Ignacio, 19, 20, 78
Reely, Juan, 181
Regency, Council of, 41, 43, 46
Regla, Countess, 67
Riaño, Intendant of Guanajuato, 16
Riego, Colonel, 30, 32
Ricardos y Iberri, Doña Ana Apolinaria, 3
Rincón, Manuel, 106, 114, 145, 154, 201
Riva Palacio, Mariano, 107, 120, 173, 186, 203, 204, 206, 208, 286, 296
Rivas y Rodrígues Roa, Doña María Gertrudis, 4
Rivera. Ramón, 296
Rivera Cambas, Manuel, 59, 151, 212, 298
Roa Barcena, José María, 107, 131
Roa y Alcalde, Doña Carmen, 5
Romero, Manuel, 110, 146
Romero de Terreros y Trebuesto, Doña Dolores, 5
Rosa, Luis de la, 136, 137, 165, 203, 207, 245, 246, 248, 249, 251, 260, 261, 262, 264, 265. 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 316
Rosales, 20
Rosains, Juan N., 26
Rubio, Cayetano, 295

S.

Salas, Mariano, 137
  provisional president, 152, 154
Samaniego, Saturnino, 37
San Patricio companies, 181

Santa Anna, José Antonio López de, 14, 30, 31, 36–39, 53–55, 57, 59, 70, 72, 73, 76, 87, 90–92, 95, 96–98, 104–107, 110–116, 118, 122, 123, 127, 130, 132, 135, 136, 142, 145, 152, 154, 156, 157, 158, 161–163, 165, 169, 189, 190, 193, 201, 222, 238, 252, 279, 300, 316, 321, 322
  character, 102–103
  dictator, 78, 80, 88, 102
  dissolves Congress, 87
  president, 76, 155
  provisional president, 99, 100, 101
  returns from exile, 190, 191, 192, 321
Santa Anna, General Justo, 192
Santanistas, 122, 127, 130, 144, 187, 189, 192, 316, 317
Scott, Brevet Major John M., 267
Scott, General Winfield, 153, 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 165, 166
Scottish Rite Masons, *See* Freemasonry in Mexico
Seligny, Count de, 125
Sevier, A. H., 167–168, 260
Shalapa, Juan, 189
Siete Leyes, 90–91, 95, 97, 98
Slavery in Cuba, 225, 235, 236, 243
Slidell, John, 143, 144, 145, 150, 153, 172
Smith, Ashbel, 125
Smith, Justin H., 135
Sosa, Francisco, 15
Spain, 1, 14, 23, 56, 98, 112, 129, 141, 202, 256, 274, 275
  colonial policy, 11–12, 32, 221
Spanish invasion, 72

T.

Taylor, General Zachary, 130, 141, 145, 152, 153, 156, 157, 248, 249, 270
Taxation, 67
Terreros, Manuel de, 320
Terreros, Pedro, 296
Terreros, Pedro Romero de, 320
Texas, 19, 66, 67, 82, 92, 95, 97, 101, 102, 117, 118, 119, 121–130, 135, 136, 137, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 152, 159, 160, 161, 172, 209, 222, 242, 257, 263, 266, 267, 286
Thompson, Waddy, 152, 279
Thornton, Edward, 166
Three Guarantees, 35, 39
Tornel, José M., 94, 100, 103, 145, 148, 149, 159, 194
Torrejón, General A., 153
Torres, General José A., 26
Treaty of Cordoba, 1821, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45
Treaty of 1846, 255
Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, 167, 168, 185, 245, 247, 248, 252, 253, 258, 259, 261, 263, 264, 268, 271, 272
Treaty with Guatemala, 276
Treaty with the United States, 1833, 79
Trias, Ángel, 169
Trigarantine Army, 35, 37, 40, 41, 45
Trist, Nicholas B., 158, 160, 161, 166, 167, 252

U.

United States, relations with, 10, 19, 70, 96, 103, 106, 115, 117, 119, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 135, 136, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 152, 153, 154, 155, 160, 166, 167, 168, 169, 174, 177, 178, 181, 182, 185, 187, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 208, 210, 212, 223, 225, 227, 228, 229, 234, 239, 240, 243, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251–256, 259, 260, 261–267, 270–275, 277, 280, 293, 307, 308, 311
Uraga, General J. L., 237
Urrea, General José, 97

V.

Valadés, José C., 10, 16
Valencia, General Gabriel, 98, 110, 148, 149
Valle, José de, 50
Vásquez, Colonel Rafael, 192
Vega, General Rómulo de la, 233, 238
Vélez, Pedro, 73
Venegas, Francisco Xavier de, Spanish viceroy, 14, 15, 17, 20
Victoria, Guadalupe, 22, 26, 28, 29, 39, 43, 51, 54, 57
  president, 65–69, 70, 71
Villegas, Ciriaco, 296
Viña, 36
Voluntarios Defensores de las Leyes, 110

W.

Walsh, Robert M., 231, 248, 250, 271, 273
War of Reform, 185, 187, 287
Ward, H. G., 67
Webster, Daniel, 257, 265, 266, 317
Wethers, R. B., adduction of, 271
Williams, J. J., 257
Wilson, Baronesa de, 118, 123

Y.

Yáñez, General, 180
Yermo, Gabriel de, 13
York Rite Masons, *See* Freemasonry in Mexico
Yucatán, 97, 185, 197, 205, 221, 222, 223, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 234, 235, 236, 241, 243, 250, 270, 272, 273, 274, 275, 307

Z.

Zamacois, Niceto de, 110, 122, 168, 171, 177, 195, 243, 322
Zavala, Lorenzo de, 59, 71, 76, 88